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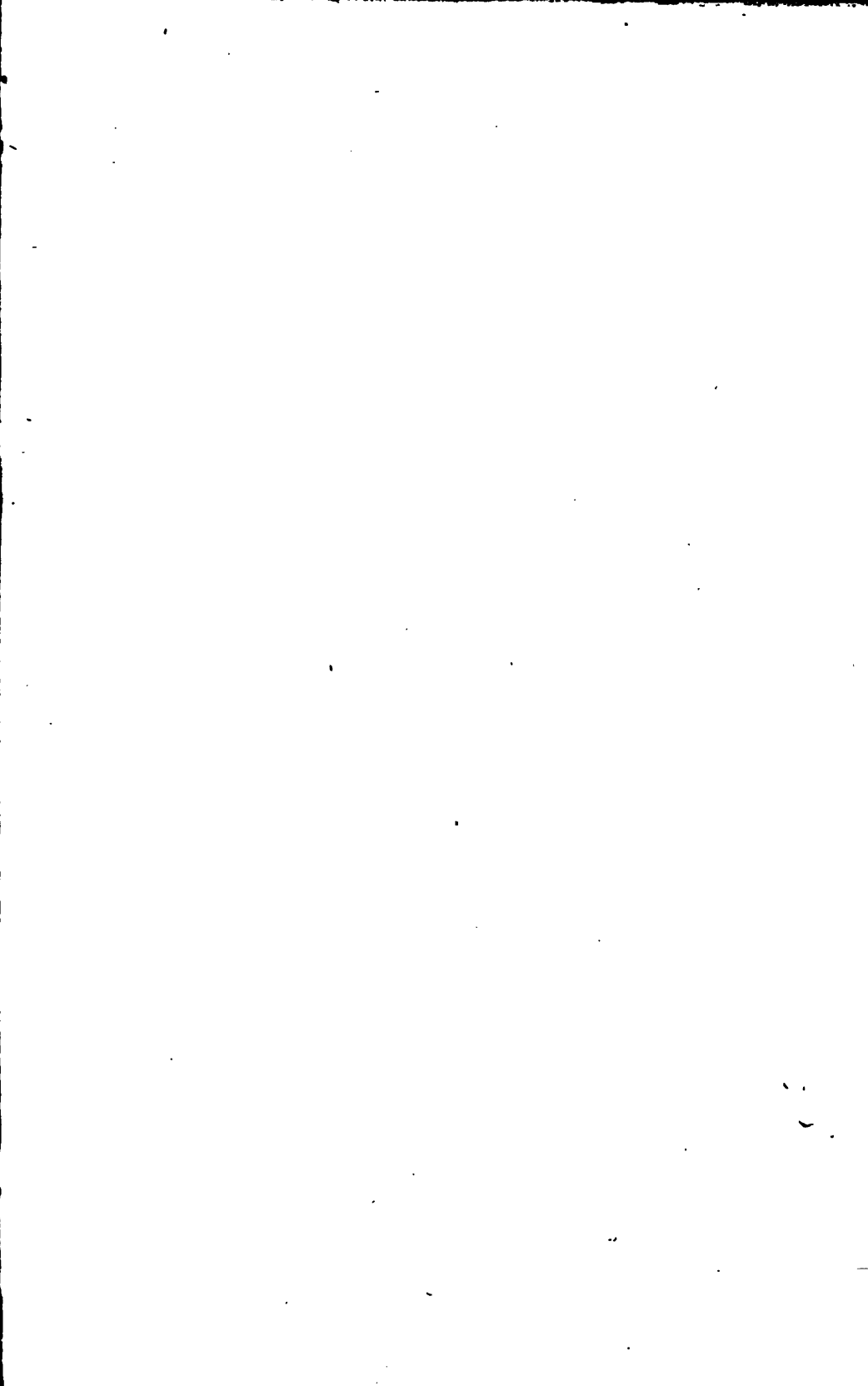
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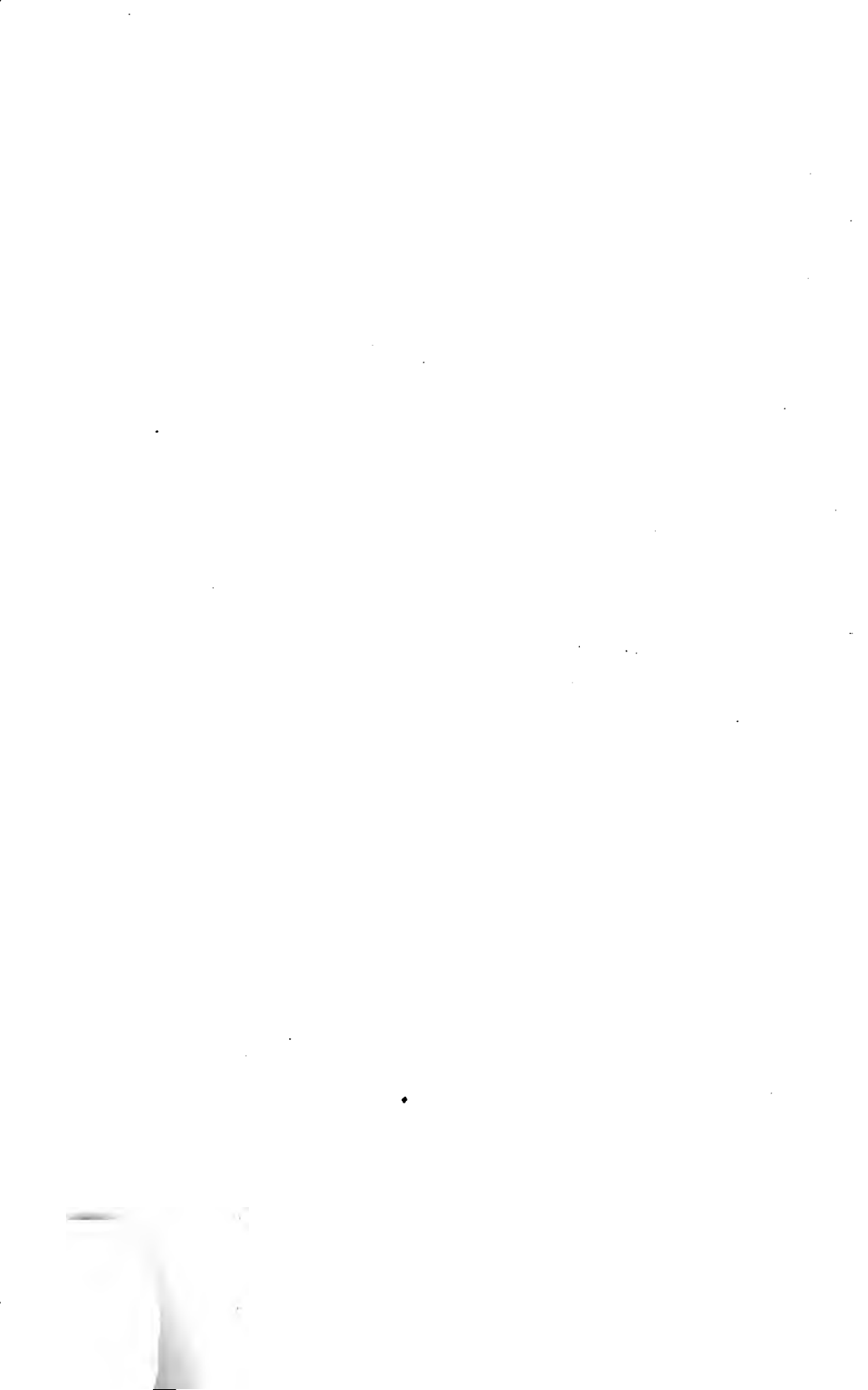
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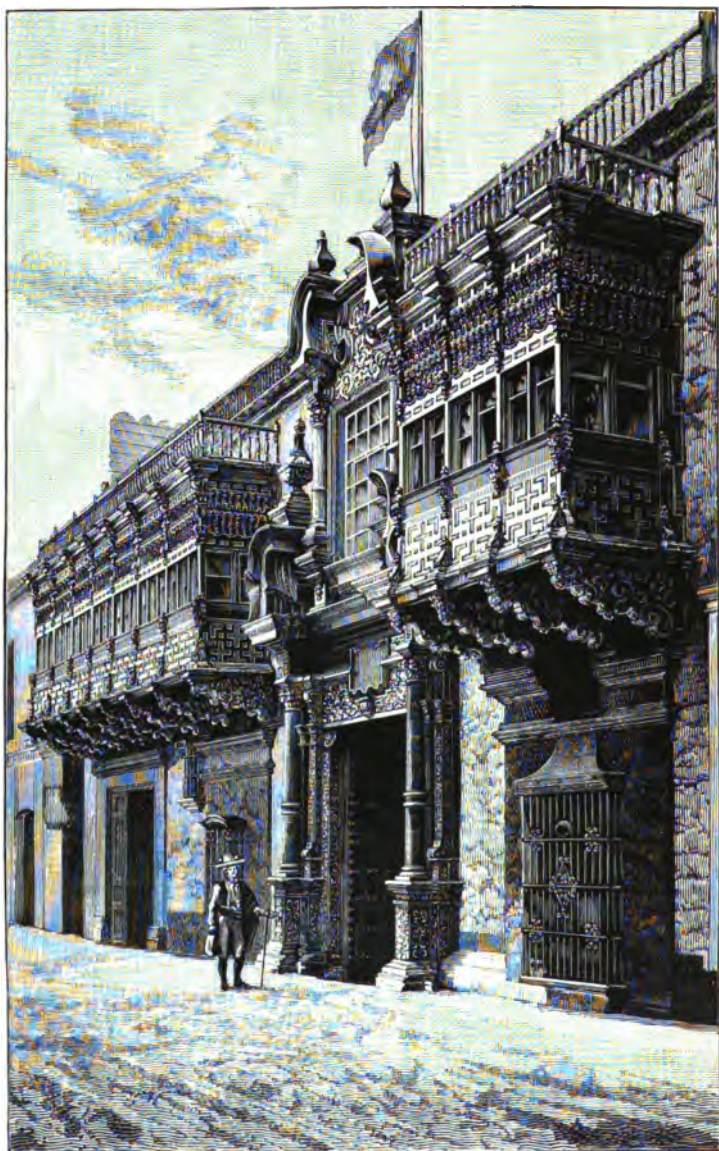
Received Oct 20, 1902





OVER THE ANDES





OLD HOUSE OF THE SPANISH VICEROYS, LIMA.

[Frontispiece.]

OVER THE WALL

THE FIRST PART

BY J. H. B. JONES

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

THE FIRST PART

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OVER THE ANDES

FROM

*THE ARGENTINE TO CHILI
AND PERU*

BY

MAY CROMMELIN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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NEW YORK

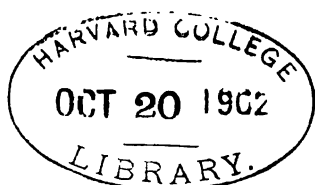
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Bright Fund.

TO
THE MANY KIND HOSTS

WHOSE GUEST I GLADLY WAS
DURING MY TOUR, IN 1894, ROUND SOUTH AMERICA,
AND HOME BY JAMAICA.

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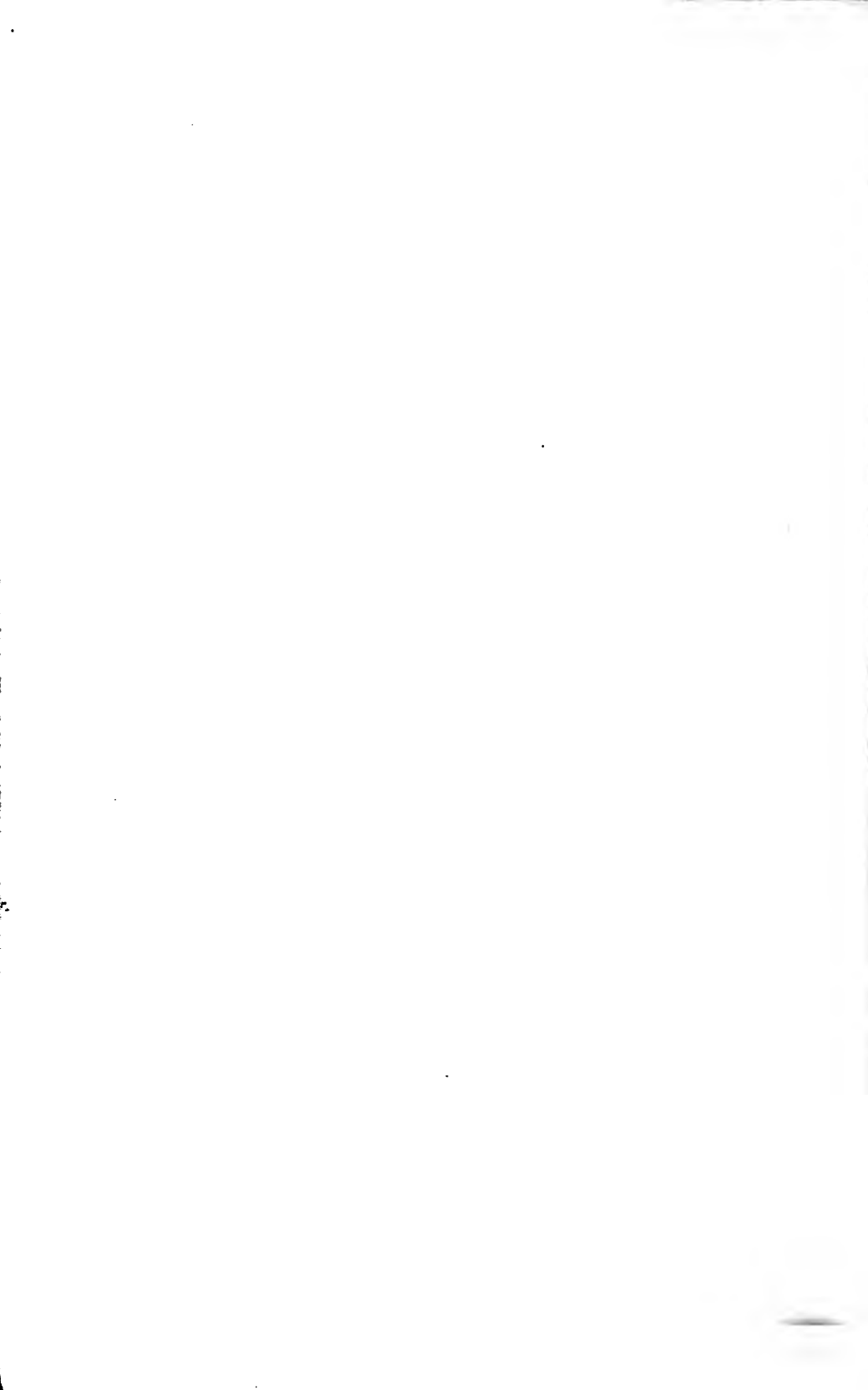
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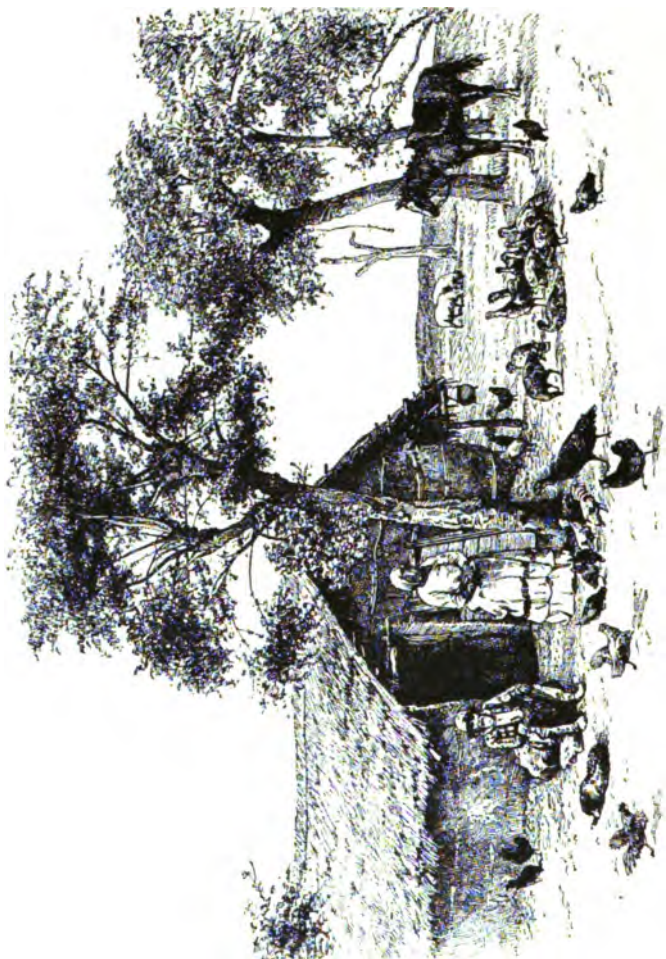
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A RANCHO IN THE ARGENTINE.

OVER THE ANDES



THE SILVER RIVER.

WAKING in the morning, after arriving off Buenos Ayres, one's first impression of the Argentine Republic and of its great waterway, the Río de la Plata, is a round vista seen through the cabin port-hole. That first glance is a surprise. What! Is this the sheeny stream which, when first viewed in the sunlight, as tradition supposes, caused its Spanish discoverers to call it the Silver River?

Rather the view is of a sea of liquid mud; for miles of wave-crested flood, brown as a mountain-stream after a spate, are heaving and gleaming to the horizon. Call it a bay, an estuary; but the water is fresh. One's morning bath to-day much resembles a dip into a marble basin filled with cocoa; but then, as the stewardess encouragingly remarks, 'It is so soft for the skin. I always recommend my ladies to try it.' And her words are those of wisdom.

Coming on deck to have a look round, a yellow flag is flying aloft. Around us lie some seven-and-fifty other vessels, each carrying the same hated signal. Alas! we are in quarantine for a week, because the *Nile* touched at Rio three days ago, where, besides fighting, there is yellow fever. Yonder vessels have come straight from Europe, but small-pox and cholera are equally dreaded by the authorities here. In point of fact, a traveller's first experience of the Argentine Republic is pretty nearly always—*quarantine*! Well for those travellers, like ourselves on the Royal Mail *Nile*, who are allowed to stay on board, as paying guests, enjoying ship's comforts. More often, and always if any case of suspicious illness occur, the passengers are landed on the little island of Martin Garcia. Vivid tales during the late week of gloomy forebodings have been poured into my ears of disagreeable experiences there; of the wretched building and its insufficient dormitories for the two sexes, bare of almost necessities; of the daily expense, yet lack of enough and proper food, till once an irate band of men passengers caught the cheating island cook and cuffed him. Enough that all the 'foreigners,' mostly English, on board agreed that Martin Garcia is a disgrace to the Argentine Republic. 'But, then, what better can one expect from such a Government?' This remark generally ended all similar discussions, and seemed voted unanswerable.

For six more days, then, our ship remained motionless, 'taking a list on one side.' In consequence, some of us slept as if cradled in a V ; others found their toes up and heads down. And in walking, everyone's person slanted strangely as if suddenly tipsy or practising for an Alpine climb at the angle of a capital *I* italicised. We looked at the land—a far-away, low, blue bank ; nothing to be seen. We looked in each other's faces, and read dissatisfaction : owners of *estancias*, or farms, anxious lest in the late summer drought their cattle might have died in unusually great number ; others because wheat was said to have gone down in price ; a few sad at returning to what they felt a land of exile. All the old residents seemed to feel a sense of coming struggle, of striving and strain. Holidays at home were over, and these bearded men were going back to their tasks reluctantly. That was the keynote. It was curious to watch them, for a passing traveller like myself. What a contrast with the merry carelessness of the young fellows fresh out, who all had Spanish grammars in their cabins, but 'could not study on board.' 'You'll never do any good until you know the language ; the sooner you begin the better,' said their seniors gravely, but unregarded.

Some of us therefore played 'bull'—throwing quoits on a numbered board. Others fished long hours, catching at last one cat-fish, a whiskered,

ugly, gurnet-like thing, with a fin on the back that cut like a razor, and which the sailors declared made a poisoned wound. Also the Argentine doctor on board, who watched us as a cat might so many mice, ordered what clothes we had worn to be baked in the oven. Luckily, as we were allowed to keep back silk garments and shoes, nothing was a penny the worse. Sometimes a sadly different tale is told of a bride's finery scorched to the hue of browned mashed potatoes, men's boots curled as if in the frying-pan. One day a bitter wind blew from the south, making us all shiver and remember which pole we were nearing. And, two nights, blue sheet-lightnings flashed over the sky with extraordinary rapidity, giving almost the effect of spray driving before a gale. A storm followed, when torrents of rain swept the decks as if a waterspout had burst overhead. Then orange lightning brightened the intense darkness of the night-scene. So the days of waiting passed dully. Every morning all eyes watched for the post, viz., a little steam-launch that came bobbing fussily round the idle ships delivering newspapers and letters.

At last one night a launch came alongside, bringing various husbands and brothers to greet their families, and also the glad news that we were allowed to land next morning.

On March 10, 1894, therefore, we prepared to land in the Argentine Republic, exactly a month

since we left Southampton. And now, while everyone who has been packing since daybreak finds nothing left to do during the next long hours—that the chairs are all tied in a pile, and the deck supremely uncomfortable—this is a good chance to tell the modest intention with which this book on the Argentine will have been written. It is simply to give a woman's bird's-eye view of life out there; what I saw with my own eyes of scenery and society, of comforts and discomforts in daily existence, of all that strikes one when fresh from England of differences from home. What, further, I learned from the lips of old residents first on board ship, and then during some five weeks' visit at the British Legation; and this part deals with the past and future of the country, its agricultural prospects, of the golden expectations it cherished during the boom, and the position it may yet gain, if rightly ambitious, among the countries which are the new granaries and meat-markets to the overcrowded Old World. A few more jottings also on the *gaucho* and the *gringo*; on the dream which every British-bred man here, whether biding his time on a cattle *estancia* or in a town office, hopes to realize 'some day'; on the camp and the capital; on a new walk round the world. But we shall see.

My visit to the country was purely one of pleasure—a rest after being on the wave, and before taking

wing for a fresh flight across the mountains to Chili. Therefore, seeing that on leaving home I knew no one in the Argentine beyond my old friends at the British Legation, and on arrival met with universal kindness and attentions, my description may be coloured to a somewhat rosy hue. But still, not owning a sixpence in any one Argentine investment, nor a single relation or old friend trying to make money in the strange land, at least no personal wishes tinge these views to brightness. This last is rare.

There are few of us in England who have not a younger brother or cousin farming in the Argentine. At least, we are certain to know of some neighbour's son out there—an arrow from an overfull quiver, shot across seas to find his mark. But what do we really know of the daily lives of such, with their tasks and pleasures ; of their hopes and failures, flocks and herds ; the drought caused by their summer sun, the bitter cold of the winter wind, the *pampero*, blowing from the south ?

Very little.

Vaguely we remark, 'Oh, young Green is ranching, you know.' Or, 'The Brown boys are somewhere on the pampas.' Some misty ideas therewith begin to float in our brains, roused by dim recollections of novels on Australian Bush life or tales of Texas. With this we are satisfied. But only wait till these Brown boys come home, grown to be men,

and they are first amused, then actually impatient, with the lack of interest—what they even call the crass ignorance—of their families and friends.

And I, too, lived for years in this state of Egyptian darkness of mind, only a little enlightened by meeting a young man who had returned on a holiday to England to seek a wife. He delighted in displaying his lasso, heavy spurs, and flat, plaited riding-whip to us, besides slipping into his *poncho*, which is, roughly speaking, a coloured blanket with a hole in the middle for the wearer's head. (Some, of course, are handsome, and made of fine cloth; all are picturesque, falling in a fold on the shoulders with pointed and fringed ends formed by the corners of the cloak.) But this was all—or little more.

‘You see, it's all awfully different out there, but I've not got the gift of the gab,’ confessed the young fellow frankly on being questioned. ‘Any way, it's a much freer life, and I shan't be sorry to be back and aboard one of my horses again. I've got any amount of them on our *estancia*. Now, at home I could never afford to do more than hire *one*—sometimes.’

It was a very warm morning as the *Nile*, snorting loudly, got up steam, and her huge bulk began stirring presently the turbid, shallow river, till in about an hour she neared the entrance of the Ensenada Canal. This looked exactly like a pair

of long black nippers, stretching a mile or two out on the water, to seize passing ships and convey them to the maw of an invisible land monster. A wrong impression, for its strong sides do the good work of keeping a channel free of mud up to the docks. Only smaller vessels than our floating hotel go right up to Buenos Ayres itself, and we think ourselves lucky not to have been stuck on a bank, as happened last voyage, before getting into the canal.

And now the new-comers stare with anxious eyes at this land that is to be their new home for many years maybe. There is room enough; it is six times as large as France. Will they make their fortunes? Will they toil till past middle life, and still only find footing low down on the ladder that their fellows have climbed?

Here begin low banks to the canal where willows are refreshingly green to our seafaring eyes. One old resident takes up his parable, and says: 'That is the *sauce* (saw-see): it was introduced by the Spaniards, like all the other trees in this part. People say there was not a single indigenous tree hereabouts except the *ombu*, and it is no good for anything but shade.' 'Ah! there is pampas-grass,' cries a lady, pleasurably recognizing tall silver plumes stirring in the faint breeze. 'Pampa-grass, please,' put in an *estancia*-owner mildly. 'Excuse me for possible rudeness in correcting you. Living

out in the camp for months without ladies' society one grows boorish, I know. Still, you don't say meadow's-grass at home.' Pampa-grass, he further vouchsafes, is no longer often seen growing wild excepting in low land. Wherever cattle come, it begins to disappear, and so seems dying out except in Indian grounds.

By one o'clock we were moored alongside the quay, close to a big Custom-house shed, and eagerly viewing a train awaiting us out on the sunny, sandy plain. . . . Towards five o'clock of the afternoon, hot, limp, and dejected, the last passengers emerged from that same *aduanas*, hurrying to the gaping gangway in the side of the hospitable *Nile* for a last lemon and soda before starting. *What* a time!—all indignantly sighed, with memories of the quick work that British officials at Liverpool or Southampton would have made of our baggage.

But here we are in a land where nobody hurries anything—except their horses. It is maddening, when you want something done right off, to be smiled on, or shrugged at, and answered 'Mañana!' (To-morrow!), which you soon learn signifies a day that may come next month, even next year—or never! There is often no help for it but to possess one's soul in patience. The Custom-house ways were to transport all the luggage pell-mell into the barn-like building, shooting it down in varied piles on the ground. Among these wandered disconsolate

or eager-eyed owners of lost property, poking, searching, and fussing, deck-chairs and cabin-trunks being exasperatingly alike and numerous.

Thanks to having little luggage and a large painted name on each item, my trunks were soon gathered from the four corners of the building by friendly hands. I sat down on my property, watching one fellow-traveller who had a list of nine-and-twenty articles, and defending my own heap from the zealous snatching of other people's porters, who, like 'the hosts of Midian,' came and prowled around. It was too hot for words—only fit for ejaculations. Presently came the dreaded inspection, which is reputed terribly severe. Here luck again helped me. A fellow-passenger, who had been twenty years in the country and was returning on a visit, being director of some of the principal railways, had kindly taken me in charge. He, helped by friends who had come to welcome him, made a great show of eagerness in dragging forward my luggage while keeping up in Spanish a hot running fire of comment. 'Hombre! hombre! (Man, man!) don't look too close at a lady's belongings. It isn't civil, hardly in good taste. Who here wants to pry into everything? She has nothing to declare—she says so.' The official looked as if he would have liked to examine some suspiciously new-looking gowns and hats much more closely, for duty on any *new* articles is very heavy. But, most likely out of respect for my friend, he

passed me free. Almost all my fellow-passengers had to pay more or less. One bride on her wedding-presents ; a gentleman seven guineas on a dress that a lady friend had asked him to bring out for her ; another bachelor five pounds on a parcel of children's clothes entrusted to his care. The lesson is worth remembering for intending travellers hither. I even heard of these same officials, when less pressed for time than usual—save the mark!—rummaging through all the contents of one family's trunks and charging on new gloves and the soiled pieces of an old silk gown unpicked in Europe and brought out as possibly useful.

When in the evening we really got into our train, this left nothing to be desired. Pullman cars, with seats for two, reversible, so as to make a *parti carré*, and covered with a cool rush or grass plaited texture from which dust is easily brushed. All around spread low ground, flat as the pastures of Holland, though the grass was far coarser, and dried up after the summer drought, but equally clothed with herds of cattle and also horses. This plain, nevertheless, was called 'rolling land' by my neighbours, who pointed out some very slight swells in the distance noticeable against the evening sky, in which the sun was now dropping like a fiery bomb diffusing a red haze. I ought to see the south of the province. There the land was absolutely flat as the sea, with never a bush or a tree to be seen—none !

I could see very few where we were. 'There appear to be no stones,' I said. This last remark was accepted without correction. There is not so much as a pebble for little naughty boys to fling at windows, and therefore mud is used for building purposes, a process I saw later.

First impressions are always the most striking ; but it is as well to make certain they are not wrong. Mine I was always glad to submit to the criticism of 'old Argentine hands,' who would rouse thereat to fresh interest in what custom had staled for them, adding explanations that, like postscripts, contained more matter of interest than what preceded them. So now I noticed that along the dusty roads, and in some hamlets by which our train passed, there were many poor-looking men on horseback. They were never trotting, but cantering easily on long-tailed little nags, a sheepskin or two under their saddles. 'One might fancy,' I remarked, 'that while English labourers trudge home at sunset, these ride.'

'Quite so,' assented my kind friend before-mentioned, of the Custom-house, to whom I also owed, when on shipboard, hours of interesting conversation upon his long experiences in the Argentine Republic. 'They all own horses here ; thirty shillings even will buy one. When I came out as a young man, it was no uncommon thing to see a man riding in the streets of Buenos Ayres, who would pull off his

ragged hat and hold it towards you, asking alms for the love of God.*

This idea of 'beggars on horseback' tickled my sense of the ludicrous; a few weeks later, when 650 miles inland, I enjoyed seeing the spectacle myself.

'Well, but these are rather sorry-looking animals, surely,' was the next observation hazarded; for, indeed, the subjects of discussion were not only sorry but melancholy seeming little horses. Some had ewe necks, drooping hindquarters, and the most an air of general dejection of outline not much enlivened by their being often spotted bay and white, or piebald, like circus horses.

'Yes, but they are very enduring. I have ridden sixty miles myself in a day on one horse, and some will even do a hundred. Of course, then you turn your beast loose for a fortnight. But as to that, I remember once, when we were riding for some days on a journey, I noticed a *peon* called Pedro, who was riding the same horse for two days running. It was a very ugly pony; a big head and body like a barrel, with legs so short one might have nicknamed it The Dachshund. "Pedro," said I, "why not take

* The editor of the *Standard*, Mr. M. Mulhall (who has written a valuable handbook on the River Plate), also told me the same tale. Forty years ago there were no poor in Buenos Ayres except a few aged persons who wore a police-medal, and made their rounds on horseback every Saturday, when they were presented with a copper coin by charitable persons, or sent away with the apology, 'Pardon me, brother, for giving you nothing.'

another pony?" for we were driving a troop of spare ones in front of us. "Oh no, señor," said he; "this is a poor man's horse; he knows what is expected of him, and we like each other." So twenty-five to thirty miles a day Pedro did for nearly a week on the same beast.'

'When the horses are driven ahead, are they not likely to scatter and give you trouble?'

'No, because it is generally the custom to take a mare with them from the same farm. They cluster round her like a guard, and will even pass right through a similar *tropilla* (troop), neither set ever mixing. But sometimes the horses are tied to the tail of a cart, as many as sixteen together.'

Another story was told me later by an acquaintance in the country to whose door a native rode one evening, himself and his strawberry horse very tired, but only meaning to rest an hour or so. They had galloped from before sunrise about thirty leagues, and had still some miles to go, making altogether a hundred English miles. The host begged him to take the loan of a fresh horse to finish the journey, but the *gaucho* refused to part from his own even for the time. Then the Englishman offered to buy the strawberry for eight pounds, which would be a very good price, seeing that ten will buy one of the best in the country. But the owner again begged to be excused; adding, however, he would gladly make a present of the animal, though he would not

sell it. This, on the other hand, the Britisher would by no means hear of ; for, as he told me, such a gift from a native generally costs one far more in the end than buying at a fixed price. The value of what is so politely placed *à su disposition* is always expected to be replaced, and never considered a wiped-out debt, should you go the extreme length of taking what you are not really wished to accept.

The dust meanwhile poured thick into the train, as if bucketfuls were being sifted over us. Some windows were let down on account of the March heat, but it streamed through the wooden blinds, or *persianos*. Our railways in England might, nevertheless, well take a lesson from these Argentine trains, where the passengers' comfort is admirably well studied.

As so many people at home have money invested in Argentine rails, which latter, since the crisis, have naturally not paid their previous high interest, it may be encouraging to quote the words of my friend, the popular and universally respected director, on this subject. Railways in the Argentine, he said to me, *have never done more work, and had less profit*, than of late ! The reason of this is owing to an under-current of want of confidence in the Government. If once this Government showed signs of stability, even only for four or five years, in his opinion people would then begin to invest money again and commerce would increase. Now, with

the paper dollar worth about one shilling and threepence of English money, instead of being equal to four shillings and twopence, see the result. The railway companies are obliged to raise the wages of their servants and officials to keep them from starving, but they are unable to raise their fares in the same ratio—for that the travelling public would not tolerate. Hence the low dividends, which are so disappointing to those who used to think of their 'Argentines' as laying golden eggs.

What wretched, tattered and soiled stuff is this same paper currency! On first receiving a handful of it in lieu of a bright English sovereign, one's feelings are those of disgust, even of dismay, should the recipient be of a nervous temperament, inclined to suspect microbes lurking in what must have passed through hundreds of grimy hands. Irish one-pound bank-notes are bad enough, when produced on rent-day from an old stocking and smelling of peat and baccy. And perhaps this is the origin of the scorn with which a mean-spirited buyer is sometimes told over there to 'Keep your dirty money to yourself.' But they are sweet and neat compared to some of the twenty, ten, and even *five-cent* notes that pollute one's purse here. Think of it! To carry about the equivalent (as exchange is this year and day) of a threepenny-bit, of a penny, halfpenny, and three-farthings, all in notes seeming as aged and ragged scraps of mummy wrapping.

The talk now passed on from horses to the destination of the large amount of cattle I already noticed, although to the eyes of my companions these numbers were utterly insignificant, compared with the usually big herds on large *estancias*. They told me of a large *saladero*, or beef-salting business, which used to be at Baraccas, near Buenos Ayres. Here over a million of cows and horses were yearly slaughtered, the latter for their hides, the former to be converted into dried meat and sent to Brazil. This in the course of a century became a public nuisance, as the river close by, and also the Plate, into which it flowed, were dark red with blood, while millions of poisoned fish lined the riversides, producing an unimaginable stench.

At present Espelata, about fifteen miles from the capital, owns a *saladero*, called the Nelson Meat Factory, supposed to be the largest in the world. In the handbook of the River Plate, by Mr. Mulhall and his brother—a most excellent work, full of statistics and briefly-worded information about each province, department, and even village, in the Republic—they say of this, the Highland Scot Canning Company establishment: 'It can slaughter 60,000 head of cattle and 100,000 sheep monthly. The principal building is a quadrangle three stories high, with a length of 600 feet on each side, covering eight acres English. It has ten sections, all lit by electricity and gas made on the spot. . . . Such is

the neatness of the whole establishment that 500 horned cattle can be killed, cut up, and tinned in two and a half hours, and at the close not a vestige is left of the operation.' They add that all the tin cases, etc., used are made on the premises, where no less than 300 kinds of machinery are employed.

Whether this really surpasses the famous Chicago pig transformations I do not know, but it sounds marvellous enough in the quick food-producing line for my taste.

Now the train is entering the suburbs of Buenos Ayres, and passengers begin to flap themselves energetically with handkerchiefs to remove some top layers of their dressing of dust, the 'natives' especially putting an artistic method into their manner of flipping hats and flagellating backs. The train was passing through flat-roofed buildings that gave a semi-Oriental look to the town, while here and there great buildings reared themselves to the sky, 'built in the Boom time and now chock-full of nothing,' said my companions. Looking down at the streets, their bad pavement, full of holes and hollows, drew my attention.

'Oh, that is a trifle,' announced my railway-director friend cheerfully. 'There is a story told of a man who was walking along carefully, picking his steps as everyone in Buenos Ayres ought to do. Presently he saw a new hat lying on the surface of a broken-up portion of pavement, where he noticed

a fissure. It seemed a good hat, so the finder poked at the prize with his stick, uncovering thereby the head of a man, who said, "Hullo!" "What are you doing there?" retorted the other. "I've fallen in a hole." "Heigho! man, you are in a bad plight." "Yes, but think how much worse off my horse is. He is down below me!" This tale seemed at first rather a camel to swallow; but after a week's experience of the extraordinary possibilities of Buenos Ayres roads, I could almost have gulped it down without an effort.

Soon the train steamed into the station with its guard of white-uniformed, green-epauletted soldiers; and here, in the thick of a bustling crowd, my kind hostess greeted me. It was pleasant, after the heat and dust of the day, to emerge into the cool of the evening air and drive through the streets, which had the pleasingly strange look that after a few days' acquaintance becomes a vanished charm. Here the rude arches of an old arcade had a background of bright colour in shops hung with cheap articles, such as rose-striped *ponchos*, and brilliant yellow flannel shirts, even trousers of the same hue. Farther on a Chinese theatre was advertised. Then came a gleam of the wide brown water, pretty green *plazas*; here a palm outlined against the afterglow in the sky, there a garden pavilion perched at the angle of a wall starred with jasmine. In every street tram-cars, announced by tooting horns, scrambled past,

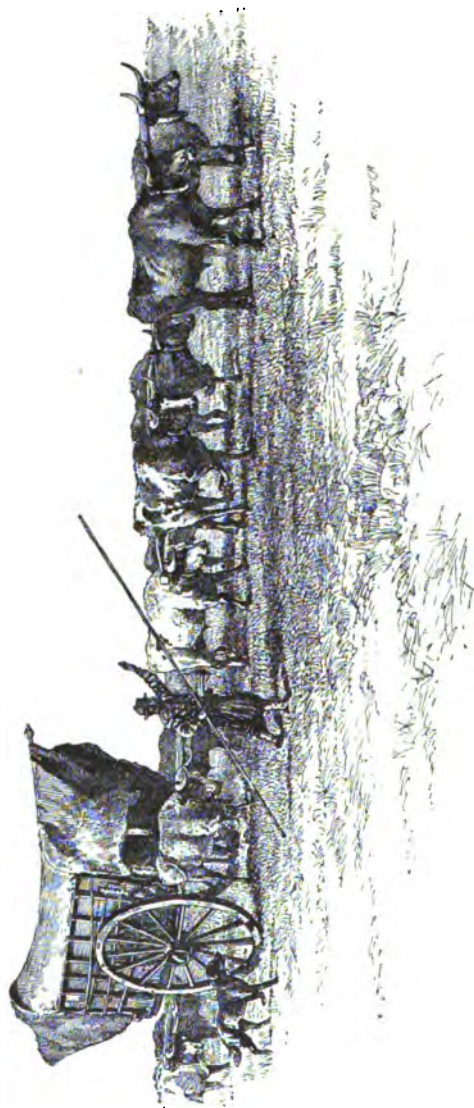
no other word serving to describe the stumbling efforts of the poor tram-horses to start after any stoppage. Two-horsed street victorias jolted over pavement more rough than that in any dead town of provincial France or Italy. It was a rainless twilight evening, but all the carriage hoods were up, hiding the occupants. This is a custom of the country ; the English are known by driving exposed to the gaze of the populace. In the Calle Uruguay, where especially the paving-stones were like boulders, and the street apparently the bed of a mountain torrent, we lurched into the gutter at an extreme angle, the swarthy coachman pulled up, making a hissing sound to his horses—said to be a relic of Moorish custom learnt by the Spaniards—and we entered a delightful house. It was dusk in the drawing-room, but through two wide glass doors one saw a square of what seemed in the twilight green jungle. In the middle of an inner *patio*, or court, converted into a garden, plashed a fountain. Palms and bananas mingled their fronds in dark masses, whilst roses and crimson hibiscus gleamed faintly below. This was restful indeed to the senses after a month at sea ; and right glad I was to be now welcomed by my host also to his home, the British Legation.

IN THE CAMP.

‘WHAT is the camp?’ This question is almost invariably put by every puzzled newcomer to the Argentine, unless, as in my case, enlightenment was given on board ship. It is bewildering to hear most of our fellow-passengers talking of how their homes are in the ‘camp,’ and of long rides in the ‘camp’; of seeing cattle lassoed and rounded up at *rodeos* in the same universal ‘camp’; more surprising still, of its loneliness!

One day during my stay the officers of Her Majesty’s gunboat *Racer*, calling at the Legation, naïvely inquired, ‘Please tell us what is this camp they have here, for we have just met a lady and her daughters who *say they live in it.*’ And we all laughed, for they joined in also, at the explanation.

The camp, then, means simply country, derived from the Spanish *campo*. And a *quinta*, or villa, in the suburbs, or a lonely *estancia*, or cattle-farm, surrounded by leagues of grass, are equally vaguely described as being ‘in the camp.’ Curiously, this



AN ARGENTINE OX-WAGGON.

idiom seems so to have caught the English ear that even the more homelike expression of the Australians, 'to live up country,' is never once heard.

'We are invited out to the B.'s *estancia* in order to show you something of camp-life,' announced my hostess one day. So, as I much wished to see one of these large farms, and as Mr. B.'s *estancia* especially is noted for its horse-breeding, we agreed to start early next morning, so as to make a long day of it. Leaving town towards ten o'clock, our train was luckily rather empty and still cool at that hour. The line was that of La Plata, the same from the Pereyra junction, half-way, as that by which I had travelled after landing at Ensenada. But now, not being tired, there were fields of pumpkins and sweet potatoes to notice, and maize standing up tall and parched, all its green pride and waving glory of blossom gone, its pennons brown and half-mast-high, because the cobs were nearly ripe. Then we passed the famous demesne of Señor Don Leonardo Pereyra, on which he is reported to have spent about two hundred thousand pounds in improvements and the importation of prize stock from Europe, and above all—*which has woods*. These last looked so shady in the March heat, and were so agreeably diversified with meadowland, that the estate had quite a park-like appearance. True, the trees on closer inspection were all blue Australian

gums, and even some fine sized ones, scattered in a glade where one longed to take a morning canter, were not planted twenty years ago. No matter for that. These woods are a unique sight hereabouts, everyone says. To see really native woods one must go farther afield to the other provinces.

At our wayside station we were met by Miss B. with a victoria and pair of horses, and started for a forty minutes' drive along a road three times as broad as an English highway. This apparently lavish prodigality of land has its good reasons, nevertheless. The roads, be it remembered, have no stones, not so much as a grit in them, and are therefore more or less dusty in summer and muddy in winter. This one, at any slight rise or fall in its generally dead level, was broken up into respectable gullies and watercourses, some yards wide in places, and possibly termed 'ruts,' avoiding which, by judicious sweeps to right and left, we had still the choice of between three and four sets of wheel-tracks deeply defined in brown ridges. But between these the victoria bowled smoothly along, for carriages here have springs meant to stand such strains as coach-builders at home do not dream of. One of my friends lately staying in the camp was taken out for a long drive in a waggonette with four horses by his host. The latter, annoyed at finding an unexpectedly deep watercourse across the line he wished to take, drove his team at it and up the

opposite bank—with success! But the experiment was described as nearly equal to attempting the feat in England over a ditch and low bank. Miss B. was proud of their road, nevertheless, as her father had it mended every winter, so that it was always good to drive on. It is in the neighbourhood of large towns, such as Buenos Ayres, that the heavy bullock-carts, with their great teams of six to eight beasts, cut up the highways into bogs of mire. Given a slight hollow in the stiff clay soil, the winter rains soon form a *pantano*, or mud pool, that grows to a dangerous depth, literally engulfing whatever luckless animals are driven unwarily into it. You may see as many as six skeletons in a hole when summer drought follows, showing where the poor beasts had sunk up to their nostrils in the mud, and died exhausted and choked for want of men and ropes to drag them out.

On either side of the road the camp stretched in a slightly-rolling expanse, with not a tree or bush to break its surface, save for some two or three clumps of wood in the distance. These *montés*, or plantations, proved to belong to the B. estate and that of Mr. B.'s brother; they are entirely of blue gum, and have only sixteen years' growth. The eucalyptus woods seem a happy experiment here, and, if more largely carried out; would not only give shelter and shade to the cattle in the fierce summer heats, but also help to attract the oft-needed rain. For part of

the way we drove by a tall hedge of prickly *sina-sina*, a broom-like graceful shrub with yellow flowers, in and out of which whirred flocks of small birds like finches. Beyond this the wide fields lay parched and brown, occasional tracts of lucerne, or *alfalfa*, looking most verdant in contrast. Little wonder that all *estancieros*, or estate-owners, are enthusiastic in its praise.

Now we arrived at a wooden boundary gate set in some miles of wire fencing. This was the entrance to Mr. B.'s estate, and was opened for us by a *peon* who had come galloping from the house—a mile away—for that purpose. A large tract of ground here was covered with manure-heaps, in preparation for laying down the invaluable lucerne. This will last at least seven years, whilst it is variously estimated that from four to seven crops can be taken off it in the season. Clumps of bluish-green gum-trees dotted here and there gave a semi-English aspect to the scene, further borne out by flocks of ordinary sheep, and one of bigger Lincolns, grazing in the distance. But this was altered by seeing tall gray birds stalking about shyly, much resembling emus, and that were, in fact, the native ostriches.* Passing the utterly dry bed of a stream and an equally empty pond, reminding one that here was no land of running brooks, the drive wound under

* The *rhea* differs from the African ostrich in having three toes instead of two.

really fine, although young, gum-trees, that cast a delightful shade.

We skirted a garden, catching glimpses of velvet sward and bright flowers, and stopped before a pretty house, surrounded by a wide veranda covered with creepers, where Mrs. B. and her family were awaiting us with cordial welcome.

On entering the house, it was so shady and cool that one first realized how warm the sun had been for the last half-hour. We were taken upstairs to as prettily furnished a bedroom as any in England, and, after removing the March dust, which here is *not* 'worth a king's ransom,' rejoined the family in a wide upper passage used as a sitting-room. The cane lounging chairs and noonday twilight—for the *persianos*, or outer blinds, were drawn down everywhere—showed how much people here avoid the sun.

Breakfast soon followed, at twelve o'clock, for English hours for meals are seldom kept, and we went downstairs to a most substantial repast. Beginning with soup, followed as a matter of course by cold meat, called *fiambré*, we went through a variety of courses, ending with excellent green figs, water-melons, grapes, and peaches. By the way, the Argentinos are so fond of cold meat that they have many *fiambré* restaurants; nevertheless, they oddly dub any failure, such as the late Palermo races run in a slight dust-storm, 'a cold-meat affair.' The

origin of the invariable custom of giving cold meat as a first dish is probably that the traveller, being supposed to be too hungry to wait, was hastily provided with whatever was ready in the larder. Whilst he thus took off the sharp edge of his appetite, eggs were quickly cooked, and then came the *bife* (pronounced 'beefy'), or beefsteak, which needed a longer time.

Lunch over, everyone adjourned—still in shady gloom—to take coffee in the *salita*, a small sitting-room, furnished with a round table in the middle, a harp on a raised stand in one corner, and a piano in another. Our hostess and one daughter now discoursed to us most excellent music.

Naturally, out in the camp there is lack of even the weekly arrival of home newspapers, as also of new books, though in Buenos Ayres Mackern and Shine's splendid library, and even bookstalls at the various stations, might tempt one to imagine one's self again in the land of Smith and of Mudie. Besides, all pointed here to an open-air life, and the family were returning immediately to their handsome town-house in the capital, to enjoy the winter gaieties. It must not be supposed that this country-house, with its handsome *altos* (or upper stories) and large gardens, can be considered an average specimen of the usual *estancia*. The latter are generally of the bungalow pattern, with a separate building for servants and kitchen across a *patio*.

One description impressed itself on my mind from its open-air imagery.

‘My partner and I lived at an *estancia* that had, like most houses, a passage right through it,’ an acquaintance told me one day. ‘And when it was hot weather we used to live out in the veranda a lot, while the two doors of the house stood open. Then it was great fun to see some tame guanacos we had come peering into the passage of the house and sniff at everything near. It was all right so long as they were not disturbed. But if anything startled them, or one caught sight of himself in a mirror, then there was a row. The whole set would go straight for the farther door, seeing light there, and upsetting all in their way—writing-tables, lamps, chairs, everything sent flying!’

Towards three o'clock it was voted cool enough to go outside, although the sun's glare was still that of the hottest mid-July at home. So we paced under parasols to the stables and farm-buildings close by. In the middle of the first yard rose a brilliant red water-mill—reminding me of some seen in Holland, there used for emptying canals—its fans stirring overhead in a slight breeze. Around were loose-boxes, prettily built, where were housed some promising young horses meant for carriage use, and to be disposed of at a coming sale on the farm; also two magnificent Clydesdale stallions, that, when trotted out for our benefit, verily, like Job's war-

horse, seem clothed with thunder and rejoicing in their strength. The Scotch major-domo, as they termed the steward, then showed with laudable pride the Clydesdale yearlings and two-year-olds. What beauties they were!—some thirty of them. They filled rows of loose-boxes in a vast shed, or *galpon*, of which the roof was supported on uprights. One could have easily believed one's self in England, hearing him descant on their good points. Yes, and later, when with an Irish helper he took us to see as many or more yearling Durhams, filling a long cowshed—a goodly sight.

But, outside, a glance beyond the wooden paling reminded one of the land we were in.

There, under the shade of an *ombu* tree, waited a group of meek horses, tied up to the railing by their bridles, and ready saddled for the use of any *peon* or herder who might need one. This, to my mind, is a truly Argentine feature. No Argentine will walk a yard if he can ride. He may be seen in town coming out of one shop, meaning to cross the street to another one opposite. His horse is waiting, either hobbled or its bridle tied to the stirrup. But does he lead it across? Not he. He swings himself into his saddle, with its sheepskin beneath and its silver initials or other ornament, if only a stud-ding of nails, at the raised back, and rides the few feet of distance necessary. Whenever I remember even wayside *ranchos*—that is, small native farms or

cottages—it is with the picture of a drooping-necked horse under a tree, saddled, waiting.

Before leaving the farm precincts I glanced into an outhouse, where a swarthy half-Indian labourer was shovelling a heap of maize ready winnowed for use, and that looked excellent. Beyond was the major-domo's house, with a long row of buff-washed low buildings containing the *peones'* sleeping and eating rooms. It all looked 'fresh as paint,' and as neat as the most 'show' farm in England.

Next we turned our steps to the kitchen-garden, admiring the many vegetables and wide strawberry-beds. On our path a quantity of blue-gum nuts were carefully spread to ripen in the sun. These the Italian gardener pointed out, and then displayed a nursery of baby gum-trees—some of the red kind also—which he had reared from seed.

'They will make *montés* soon,' said Mrs. B. Then passing through a wood, she told us that when she came to this estate as a bride there had not been a bush or tree here when her husband built the house. Looking up at the tall trunks round us, shedding their bark in strips like aged residents, with their fine pendent leaves overhead, and then remembering the excellent kitchen-garden we had just left, and seeing the pretty pleasure-ground before the house, with its big palms and aloes, its roses and tuberoses, fountain and velvet sward, it was difficult

to realize that a short sixteen years ago nothing of all this existed.

‘Where we stand was just the pampa; we laid out the drive, walks, gardens, and planted the trees. But come to the other side of the house now. You have not seen our orchards and fruit-garden yet.’

As we went I thought how encouraging it must be for any young couples settling down in the desolate coarse-grassed camp to think that, with means and energy, they also can grow woods of eucalyptus and have perfect gardens before sixteen years. So brief a time! Given home happiness and some good seasons, it might pass by like a dream. But one thing is needed—water! ‘If you planted a walking-stick in the ground here, and watered it, it would grow,’ has been said to me in forcible illustration of the fertility of the soil.

On our way the gardener drew the señorita’s* attention to a small ant-hill he had just destroyed by digging it out and mixing the mass with water, so that the ants were choked in the mud. Ants are a terrible plague here, as in so many other countries, and ingenious devices with kerosene are adopted to stop their ravages. Mrs. Pakenham told us how some neighbours near the British Legation found their mantelpiece cracked one day, and suspected that ants were to blame. On search, the whole floor

* It is a South American custom to address even married ladies as *Señorita* (Miss) in conversation.

of the *sala* had to be torn up, and she herself saw two cartloads of ants' nests being removed. This ant-hill I now inspected was quite small, but I was told of a large one out in the camp on which one of our companions and five other persons had ridden up and ranged themselves abreast.

The orchards now claimed our attention. It was pleasant to see a number of calves and young heifers rejoicing in the shade of cherry and peach trees. Cattle in this part of Argentina inherit no traditions from their milky mothers of the pleasures of chewing the cud under spreading trees, or standing knee-deep in a brook on hot afternoons. Wide pampas, scorched sun, drought, are their common portion. In the fruit-garden were long rows of espalier pear-trees bearing much fruit. Unfortunately, of late years pears have all been attacked by a *bicho*, or insect, which is said to destroy them, though no details were given me as to its kind. All insects of a noxious nature are called *bichos* here, and there is no dearth of them. Even disagreeable 'humans' are sometimes designated by this unflattering epithet.

As we entered the house again, passing round the wide veranda veiled with white jessamine stars, a dinner-table was already laid there out of doors. Noontide is too hot in the open air, but how agreeable to dine in the cool of the evening thus, almost in the garden, while the fire-flies float by like stars of living flame! Now it was too late in the year

to see them, but I have heard them described as illumining a whole wood with myriad fairy lights, some separate ones so bright that they can be mistaken for distant lights in cottage windows. And one friend who was invited to a moonlight picnic had a still more vivid experience to relate. The guests were all there, but the moon was not. By some unaccountable freak the presiding luminary failed to show her face. Whilst feasting in the dark, the salad for which he was feeling was suddenly lit up by a strange glow. It was not that his lettuce had become phosphorescent, but that a fire-fly was entangled in its dressing. Even Titania could not have commanded a prettier sight than imprisoned fire-flies for her royal table. But these fire-flies pale before the famed railway beetle of Paraguay, which carries green lights on his side and red danger signals on his head. Forgive this digression! The daughters of the house told me they were accustomed to ride a great deal, especially in the early mornings before the summer sun was too powerful. They have been in the country since last December, and the heat was frequently tropical. In the evenings, when the moonlight lit the roads, the family also often liked to take a drive.

We now talked of departure, but our hostess insisted first on a 'sit-down,' ample tea being partaken of, with jam and hot scones. During this meal—as it really was—conversation turned on the trials of

camp-life for those who have invested their capital in an *estancia*. The dryness of this very March, during which only two heavy showers had fallen—I secretly thought them brief deluges—was a general topic of lamentation. No wonder, for already there had been two successive seasons of drought during the past two years; a third would be frightfully destructive on many *estancias*.

The loss of life among cattle from this want of rain is terrible in the Argentine. It speaks for itself when the sickness of hunger and thirst is classed among other cattle-plagues as an ‘epidemic’; thousands of poor beasts die of it yearly, leaving their carcasses rotting on the pampas, and it is painful to think of their sufferings beforehand.

Among other hardships, cattle-lifting and horse-stealing are frequent enough. A near relation of our host’s had suffered severe loss in this way. One night his wire fences were cut, and a large number of animals driven off. ‘But did he not try to recover them?’ was my natural inquiry. ‘Could not the thieves be found out and punished?’ ‘He did certainly try at once to have the beasts traced, but it was of no use. Probably they were already slaughtered, and the horses boiled down for grease. Afterwards—*well, it does not do to make enemies in camp!* It is wiser sometimes to suffer the loss of property rather than be too energetic in discovering the evil-doers and punishing them.’

Other persons have assured me of the same thing. It is well, they said, to give earnest advice to young Englishmen who are going far into the camp for the first time—what Australians would call going up country—‘Above all things, treat your *peones* kindly. Some young fellows make the mistake of ordering these poor folks about like so many niggers ; but they run the risk of getting paid out for it some day. It is a golden rule—do not make enemies in camp.’

When one considers the mixed origin of this race of *gauchos* and *peones*, it is easy to understand that their nature cannot be stolid under harsh treatment. Partly Indian, with an admixture of Spanish blood derived from ancestors who were the offscourings of Spain, they must almost by Nature’s laws, one would say, have inherited the cunning of the downtrodden savage with the vices of his oppressor. The *gaucho* (pronounced ‘gowtcho’) was once aptly described to me as ‘one of a class that is always on horseback and makes his living by galloping about.’ The *peon* is the Gibeonite of the country, the lowest type of working man, who does all the odd jobs except where the poor Italian immigrant has partly supplanted him. As to the real Indians, they have been driven farther and farther back before the Spaniards, their mixed descendants, and the later vast immigration of Basques, Italians, French, and other Europeans. Nowadays they are only to be found in their own grounds, and are dying out

gradually, although in 1869 their numbers were estimated at 100,000. Even the *gauchos* and *peones* are said to be dwindling in numbers.

On the other hand, concerning lawlessness in camp, an instance was told me by a Yorkshireman of a successful fight he himself made with robbers. My friend was owner of a large *estancia*, and at that time was also a Commissioner whose duty it was to keep order in the neighbourhood.

‘One evening,’ said he, ‘as I was coming home, a man on the road warned me that a party of *gauchos*, well-known horse-thieves, were passing through my land. Hearing that, I hurried to the house and there got a friend and another man to join me in pursuit of these gentry. It was getting dark before, after riding hard, we came in sight of them. They were eight or ten rascals, all mounted, of course, and driving some fifty of my horses in front. They saw that escape was impossible, for we soon caught them up; but we were only three—and the next minute pistol-shots came whizzing by our ears. With that our revolvers were out, for, though I might have hesitated to fire first, our lives seemed now in peril. I took aim, and my friend also. The whole party scattered at once, seeing one of their companions fall, leaving us with the dead man and the horses.

‘Yes, I had a little trouble about it afterwards; that is the way in the Argentine. Murderers either go scot-free, or else their imprisonment is a farce,

while honest folk generally get into trouble with the law. However, it came all right, and I gained a reputation that frightened other thieves from molesting my property for a good while.'

If some *gauchos* are horse-thieves, many are horse-copers, and though among the younger ones trickery and dishonest practices are common enough in the trade, yet warm words in praise of some of the older men—uttered forcibly by an ardent young English sportsman and polo-player—still ring in my ears: 'The only honest men that I have met with, during the five years I have known these natives, are among the old *gauchos*. The younger ones prefer lying to truth, and the more veneer of education they get the worse they grow. But one old fellow quite took it to heart lately that a lame pony had been palmed off upon me by a new horse-dealer, and declared the latter should be made to smart for his roguery. "We like to keep up our name for honour," he said proudly, speaking of his own set; and certainly no men could be fairer than I invariably found him and his friends.'

A *gaucho* is always picturesque in his peculiar costume, whether well off or poor, mounted better or worse. If poor he wears a slouched felt hat, his long black hair falling on the coarse brown *poncho* covering his shoulders. His nether garments somewhat recall the appearance of a Zouave or Turco, but are more flowing in drapery. In reality *it* is a

large red shawl which he fastens round his waist, allowing the end to trail on the ground ; then drawing it up between his knees, he tucks it into his waist-belt in front. Beneath this loose swathing appear white cotton breeches down to his ankles.

The swagger dress of a swell *gaucho*, however—for some of them are very prosperous—is really handsome. His sombrero is rakish, and his gay-spiked *poncho* of finely woven wool. Frills of lace adorn his white breeches, that are further ornamented with red worsted embroidery and tags ; while his boots—but these deserve a fresh sentence. They are often very curious, when made like some I saw of *seamless* hide, the secret consisting in the skin having been drawn down off the legs of a horse, whole. When this is tanned the ends are simply sewn up to make the toes of the boot.

But the *gaucho* cannot be pictured without a few words on his riding-gear. The saddle, peaked before and behind, is sometimes decked with embroidery and always placed over a sheepskin or two. Some are merely studded with ornamental nails at the high back, while others display large silver initials and devices. Big spurs, and a whip with a heavy silver knob that can inflict a severe blow, also the plaited thong which bears its owner's name worked into it, are the last touches to this get-up.

And now let us return to our tea-table, and talk upon the trials of farming in the Argentine.

Locusts in some provinces, and here also, though at long intervals, are a scourge no less dreaded than drought. In graphic words my hostess described how, on the *estancia* of a relative, she had seen a flight of locusts approaching that darkened the sky. A cloud at first, it spread and spread till it seemed leagues wide. Both earth and air appeared full of locusts, and everyone beat a hasty retreat indoors, closing the windows tight, lest even their curtains should not escape. All had been green outside and smiling that afternoon—grass, wheat-crops, garden. Half an hour later the whole scene was absolutely barren and brown. Not a leaf remained on the trees, not a single grass-blade on the ground. Complete desolation. Again I heard, though it sounds incredible, of the swarms covering sixty leagues of country. They even stopped the passing trains by their slippery little bodies falling on the rails in quantities. Can science not step in and invent measures to exterminate this devouring plague that nothing else living, it seems, will devour in turn? Even the dogs that eat a few locusts out of curiosity sicken for some days afterwards.*

* Soon after writing the above, while in Chili, I chanced to read an article by the Rev. H. R. Haweis in the *Contemporary Review* of March, 1894, on the Mormons. Describing their powerlessness against swarms of black locusts, he says they tried to stamp out the plague with fire and trenches. 'The insects lay dead in huge piles, but still more came on, till, as the Mormons believe, in answer to their prayer, appeared a white gull; then

Now that the evening was growing cool, I noticed several birds that were hopping outside over the smooth grass-plot, lately watered. One was about the size of a thrush, likewise brown, but with a bright touch of orange near the tail ; and this was a very interesting little fellow, none other than the *ornaro*, or oven-bird, who builds himself a fine two-chambered mud home, smoothly plastered over and roofed in. Small yellowish songsters were also flitting through the shrubs of the garden, something between a canary and a finch in appearance ; and though I did not then see them from the tea-table where we sat, I was told that pretty cardinals, with their dark bodies and knowing little red heads and top-knots, were natives here. So also are ibis, flamingoes, black-necked swans, and, last and least, humming-birds.

As to game, at other times plenty of sportsmen were eager to give me information on that point. Wild-duck abound in such quantities that, on this very evening, returning to Buenos Ayres, I saw ponds almost in the town covered with them. There are also little *batitu*, which are excellent eating (especially when they have fattened on thistle-seeds), plover, partridge, and a few wild ostriches.

gulls by fifties, hundreds, thousands. They came in flocks over the Salt Lake, settled down in the fields, gorged and vomited and gorged again, until there was not a live locust left. No wonder the gull at Salt Lake is a sacred bird, and to this day no one is allowed to shoot it.'

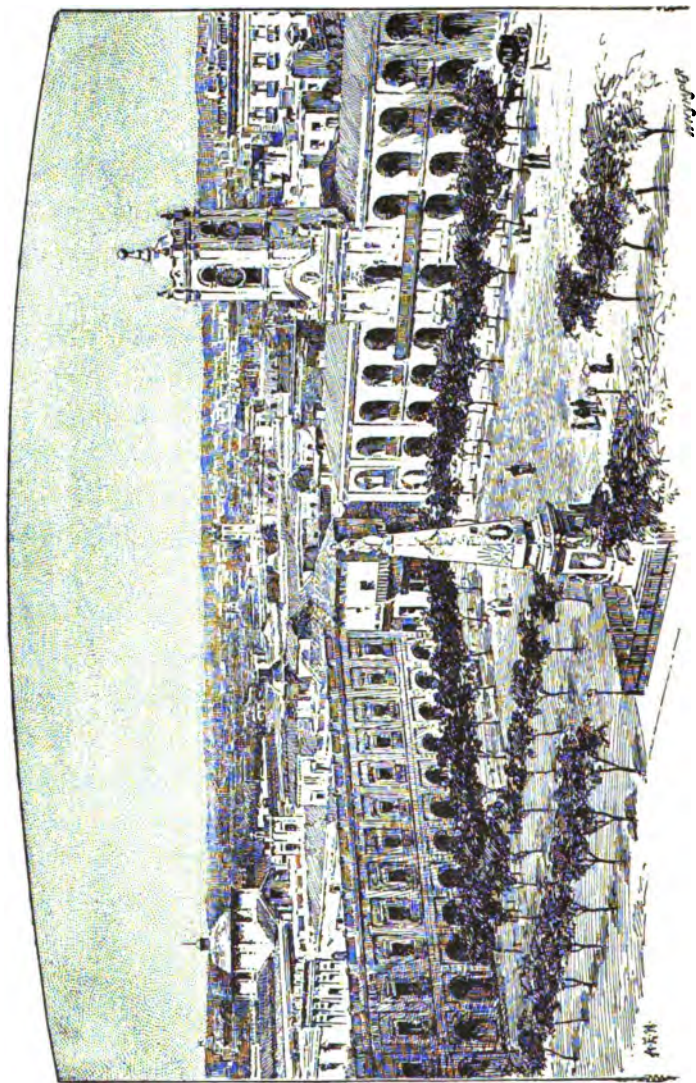
Of big game, save in the Gran Chaco, there is no longer any to speak of, though I was given a thrilling description of a jaguar hunt in Paraguay. Some deer remain still in the south ; but beyond some kinds of armadillo, guinea-pigs, and such small fry, there are no wild beasts to speak of, except where guanacos are sometimes seen, shy and rare as chamois, on the Andes slopes.

Long may the pretty songbirds I saw enliven the camp and the gardens of *quintas*, where they are protected ! But, alas ! they are threatened by a great influx of Italians into the land, who bring their own ideas of sport with them. So on Sundays half a dozen fowlers, with perhaps one gun among them all, may be seen leaving the suburbs of the town to enjoy a day's shooting in the country. Noisily and merrily they beat about for their game, and ' Miré ! miré ! ' (See ! see !) the others shout in chorus to the one with the gun at sight of the smallest feathered creature. He fires, and, if not blown to atoms, the little bird is bagged, to be sold later on as a lark. An Italian would even shoot a humming-bird.

Leaving the hospitable *estancia*, we drove once more to the station ; and on the way we passed the first of the great ox-waggons I had yet seen in the Argentine. Later on, inland at Mendoza, they were plentiful, as generally in the camp. And to see one of these huge vehicles, piled high, and

slowly dragged by a team of six or eight beasts, is a sight which has such an old-time, pastoral charm that, however frequent, it never failed to please my eyes.

Outside the poor adobe or mud-walled *ranchos* on the roadside, I now noticed the big, round oven belonging to each house, and after which the oven-bird is called. It is generally a few yards from the shanty, and some three or four feet high, some even bigger, and apparently used in common by several families. These *ranchos* were either roofed with tiles or corrugated iron, and were not particularly characteristic. But the true *peon* hovel—or, rather, booth—constructed mainly of wattled branches, astonished me later on, under the shadow of the Andes.



PLAZA VICTORIA, BUENOS AYRES.

BUENOS AYRES, OR THE TOWN OF
GOOD AIRS.

‘GOOD AIRS!’ Such is, literally translated, the rightful name of this great town, with its population of over 535,000 souls—that is, a larger one than any other of the South American cities can boast, surpassing even that of Melbourne or Sydney.

The inhabitants for the most part live in single-storied houses, built round a square *patio*, or courtyard, larger dwellings having often a second servants’ *patio*, and thus covering a considerable space of ground. These houses are built with flat roofs, called *azoteas*, where in summer evenings the boys carry up chairs, and the families all enjoy the air. There are balustrades and brick seats on the street side, and here one may be sure of seeing the dark-eyed girls watching the passers-by. It is quite a feature of Buenos Ayres, from late afternoon till dark, to see clusters of girls at the balconies of the long windows opening to the floor, where their light-

coloured dresses of the most vivid rose tints or sky-blue are fully displayed.

But these same *azoteas* had also—and still may have here, as in too many other towns of South America—a very different use. They once swarmed with armed men, firing down upon the hapless English soldiery who were butchered in General Whitelocke's invasion of 1807. And never a revolution takes place, or frequent insurrection, or election, but sees such flat roofs black with excited men and bristling with gun-barrels, whilst an opposition mob sways in the street below, fighting, shouting, and furious. Lastly, *azoteas* are useful in collecting rain in their surrounding brick gutters, which conduct the often precious water into a well in the *patio* below. Nevertheless, in many streets one now sees several houses, though still flat-roofed, proudly rearing themselves with two *altos* or stories, and some newer quarters are even entirely built three-storied; while towards the outskirts, on the side of the Park of Palermo, there are some magnificent villas in the French style, with high-pointed slate roofs, dormer windows, and so forth. But these date from that time of brief golden prosperity, the Boom, and now stand mostly empty. Mr. Mulhall is my authority for saying that it was not till after the fall of the famous dictator, Rosas, in 1852, that two-storied houses began to be built here at all, which is instructive, as noting the influx of Euro-

peans and their ideas—also, it is to be hoped, as a sign of improvement in government. Lastly, here and there are to be found a few picturesque, very old, adobe houses, with tiled roofs, all that remain of the dwellings of the Spanish settlers, built in the seventeenth century, about a hundred years after Buenos Ayres was first founded in 1535.

First founded, because there was a second foundation later in 1580. When Pedro de Mendoza in the beginning marked out the new town, he was harassed by a large force of Indians, and his garrison so weakened by hunger that in a few years the site was abandoned, and Buenos Ayres burnt. Next time proved successful. The Spaniards laid out the future capital of the Argentine on the same regular plan that they followed in all their newly-built New World cities: so many blocks of ground, called *cuadras*, of 140 yards square, or four English acres; so many rather narrow streets, intersecting each other exactly at right angles.

To tell the truth, I must regretfully confess that Buenos Ayres struck me as one of the ugliest Latin towns—for these are generally picturesque—I have ever seen. A dead level of surface; flat outlines of roofs; few public buildings, or none worth seeing; streets three miles long, much alike, and mostly atrociously paved; general sameness.

But let us look at the other side of the picture.

This same unlovely town is in many ways remark-

ably comfortable to live in. To begin with, the long streets are all laid down with tram-lines. Along these the frequent cars ply, their conductors' horns tootling. Each car turns to the right after a certain distance, and presently returns by a parallel street to that down which it came. Therefore there is nowhere in the town to which you cannot 'tram' for the modest sum of ten cents; and no one in Buenos Ayres walks a yard if he can help it. Besides, under the shade of the pepper-trees in the *plazas* are ranged numerous street-victorias, harnessed with a couple of willing little horses; and these will take one anywhere in the town for seventy-five cents—at the present rate of exchange, about a shilling of English money. The *plazas* are fairly numerous, and prettily laid out with winding paths and seats for the nursemaids and children; whilst tall palms and aloes, common pink oleanders, scarlet hibiscus, and other flame-flowered bushes, contrast with a scrollwork of flower-beds.

Also there are good hotels, theatres, clubs; among the latter an excellent one for ladies, all thanks to Mrs. Pakenham, our Minister's wife, who is its presiding genius. Then the shops, though certainly very dear, can nevertheless supply everything you want. In winter especially there is plenty of amusement to be had—dinners, dances, etc.; whilst daily or weekly tennis, polo, and cricket matches, besides the various race-meetings, all

help continually to gather the large English society together and keep the ball rolling. *The ball!* It is curious, when one comes to think of it, that every good game in every nation is played with a ball. In addition to those above-named, there are golf, football, rackets, billiards, baseball, lacrosse, and the Basque game of *pelota*, which is immensely popular in the Argentine.

It may be interesting, as so many folk in England have either sons or brothers out here, to describe simply the usual sights and doings that go to fill an average day in Buenos Ayres.

To begin with, one has an early roll and small pot of tea served in one's bedroom ; and as these March mornings are delightfully sunshiny, with *just* a right amount of heat, let us take a little stroll in the street to note any of its peculiarities. Early though it is, the dustmen are late, which is unusual for them. Generally it is still dark when the heavy roll of their great carts resounds through the streets. But now, outside every door, a dust-box, more or less neat, is standing, which has been put there last night by the under-servant before the strong, double house-doors were locked. Very soon the carts rumble near ; the boxes are all emptied, taken presently indoors, and there can be no refuse of stale vegetables in the scullery, no heap of broken glass and china in the ash-pit. What a blessing in London if our nostrils and eyes were thus spared the sight of such unseemly

clearance as shames our great capital in broad daylight !

There is no dust in the streets, though it has not rained for several days and the autumn is so hot. During the night the water-carts have been plying to and fro, and the pavements are all fresh-washed and clean. Is not this an excellence ?

Now, round the corner of the Calle Uruguay a picturesque figure comes jogging on horseback. He is a Basque milkman, seated high on a pile of sheepskins among a number of milk-cans, fastened above each other on either side of his horse, his own legs dangling about its neck.

The Basques are a large and important colony in the Argentine Republic, preserving jealously many of their home customs and all their independence and shrewdness of character. They have made the milk-trade exclusively their own. None but a Basque is a milkman. No natives, or those of other nationalities, seem to covet, or perhaps dare to interfere with, this privilege.

He has his own peculiar ideas on the subject of making butter, has the Basque. Filling the milk-cans before he leaves his dairy, he covers them with the accustomed sheepskin ; then, mounting a-top of all, he rides off at a smart pace, churning the milk by his horse's action. At the first customer's house on the road he calls, peeps into his cans, and collects what butter-pellets can be skimmed off. Should

these not be enough, he promises the disappointed housekeeper to return presently with more from his rounds ; and so, clinking merrily, he gallops along to churn and vend more of his butter.

When first this custom was told me, I treated the tale as a joke ; but if some people are squeamish enough to declare this plan of butter-making horrid—although they might be perfectly satisfied with the Devonshire way of stirring round cream with the dairymaid's hand and wrist—few will deny that the Basque is more picturesque than the London milkman, with his hand-cart and horrible cry of '*Mewilk !*' shouted down the area railings.

Strolling along the narrow side-path, the lofty height of doorways and windows, compared with those in England, seems probably due to the necessity for air in the town in summer ; and another thing which strikes the European's eye is the odd jumble of rich and poor dwellings side by side. Here a handsome mansion—beside it a small Italian wine-shop, with the unpromising announcement, '*Vino cattivo*' over the door. At each corner an *almacen*, or hardware store, is a certainty, and possibly its neighbour house shows marble steps and a delightful peep of a leafy, cool *patio*. One wonders whether it is republican equality of feeling which has caused this strange mingling of habitations, that is even more striking in other Southern sister republics.

The lofty, double outer doors of these same rich folks stand mostly open, disclosing a small entry, with tiled flooring and frescoes in florid style on either wall. Those possessing an upper *alto* often have no hall, but a fine marble staircase rising abruptly from the street between walls so elaborately painted in landscapes, or night-scenes, that surely the enormous Italian immigration here must largely include brothers of the brush. Such marble staircases are quite common in Buenos Ayres, and have a curious origin. In former days the marble was brought over as ship-ballast from Italy, and discharged before taking back a heavy cargo of wool and hides. In England we should be proud to own so great an ornament to any house; here they are held so cheap that Madame U., the wife of a rich Argentine gentleman, announced the other day with satisfaction: 'We are making great improvements in our house, and we have put *a wooden staircase in instead of that ugly old marble one!*'

The atrocity of the street pavements I have already described with some feeling, even after a lapse of weeks which has intervened since being jolted over them jarred all my nerves, reminding one of the well-known lines:

' Rattle his bones over the stones ;
Nobody cares for the pauper's groans.'

But these irregular, angular chunks of stone now claim my respect and interest, since the Portuguese

Minister told us whence they came and what was their cost. It seems that pavement was unknown in Buenos Ayres until the beginning of this century. In Mulhall's 'Handbook to the River Plate,' he says: 'The first proposal to pave the streets was rejected by the Viceroy Loreto in 1786 because the rumble of the waggons might shake down the houses.' (These, for want of stone, being constructed of adobe.) 'The first street paved was in 1795. So late as 1840 there was a *pantano* (mud-hole, or quagmire) in front of where the Bolsa now stands.' Therefore, when paving was voted a necessity of civilization, as there was no stone in all the country round, these very paving-stones were imported from Portugal at a cost of about fourpence each. It was not discovered till comparatively recently that stone existed, and could be quarried, in the South.

Of course the morning is the time to go shopping. So taking an open tram we rattle away past semi-Oriental flat-roofed houses to the Regent Street of Buenos Ayres, Florida; the prefix calle, or street, being dropped, as with Pall Mall or Piccadilly. Here a blessed quiet soothes one's ears at once, for it is wood-paved. On either side the shops display such handsome glass fronts as almost vie with the best at home. We go into a long bookshop, Mackern and Shine's, where, besides a first-class circulating library, there are all the papers and magazines I ever knew at home, and some I never

knew ; all the new best books likewise, a few only a month old. (And what this means to a lover of literature is only fully appreciated after some months spent later on in civilized Chili, where at Valparaiso, though there is so large an English colony, no similar boon exists.)

What of the shops? Well, one damsel of our party was heavy-hearted over the lightness of her purse pretty soon, although all she had bought were a few feminine trifles : a ribbon, a veil, a pair of gloves. No wonder that everyone brings out as many fal-lals as possible from England, and a successful smuggler of such—like one small shop-keeper I heard of at Mendoza—merits patronage and protection from all womanly women.

Argentinas crowded the pavement, some pretty, all fat, and dark-eyed. Many look as if dressed by Parisian *couturières*, as is, indeed, the case ; for the wealthy native ladies have all the newest fashions sent out to them, in defiance of the ruinous duties of the Custom-house.

Let us turn in to the Ladies' Club. A horseshoe marble staircase leads to some pleasant rooms over a restaurant. The institution is more modest than were it owned by the stronger sex. A dining-room comes first ; a reading and writing-room beyond—that is all. But the tables are heaped with illustrated and other papers from home ; the tea and hot buttered scones baked by the Scotch club-maid

are really delicious. One never fails to find some tired ladies resting, who have come in by tram or train from the pretty suburbs of Flores, Quilmes, or Belgrano, and who are delighted to possess a meeting-place wherein to chat with friends, engage servants, leave their parcels, or scribble a note.

In summer evenings, Florida is extremely fashionable. All hired carriages are sternly stopped, for the *beau monde* is holding a promenade dressed in its best, and filling both the street and the pavements in the Spanish Alameda manner. The Argentine mashers, small, dark, shod in patent-leather and with solitary glasses stuck in their eyes, criticize the Porteña girls (as those born in the 'port' of Buenos Ayres are called in contradistinction to other fair Argentinas). The daughters and their friends stroll up and down, six or eight together, in whispering, laughing, apparently loving intercourse, like so many pretty, bright-coloured birds. Pity that their complexions are so often spoilt with powders and paints! The plump or portly mothers walk behind—they always walk behind, even when entering a drawing-room. Is this to keep a watchful eye continually on their girls, who are never allowed to cross the outdoor threshold without a maid or other duenna? It is most likely the reason, but to English minds there seems a painful want of deference on the daughters' part in this behaviour of always pushing before their elders. Certainly Argentine

children are licensed to be as naughty as original sin prompts them ; parents here, it is said, never attempt reproof or correction : they leave the little human plant to grow untrained.

Home again, by another convenient tram. This is full of poor townfolk, but their gray or black stuff coats or gowns show no signs of a national costume. Some few women wear a small lace scarf tied under their chins—the suggestion of a mantilla.

The mid-day breakfast is generally partaken of at eleven or twelve, as suits the family. To-day, while we are enjoying a ragoût of beefsteak, called *carbonada*, cut in small dice and stewed with vegetables, an unusual stir is taking place in the street outside, visible through the lofty barred windows that are almost level with the pavement. There is a flitting going on from the opposite house. Furniture is being piled on a very high cart. The carts here are enormously high, their wheels quite Brobdingnagian to my eyes. But when one sees the axletrees, and even the body of the cart, thickly mired, one guesses that necessity is the reason why.

‘Ah, our neighbours are leaving,’ remarked my hostess, glancing over the way. ‘I expected as much. They had a death in the family lately, and they are of the old-fashioned kind.’

But why should a death cause a removal of the household? was my natural inquiry. Did the deceased die of some contagious illness?

‘No; of an accident, I believe. It is an old Argentine custom to change the domicile as soon after the funeral as possible, perhaps to get rid of sorrowful ideas. And they have very little furniture—not nearly so many things to move as we should have.’

Certainly, judging from what we saw, there seemed few Argentine Lares and Penates; none of the thousand-and-one small family treasures and curios gathered from many countries that accumulate and are cherished in every English home. However, some plump *batitus*, delicious small birds, a kind of sandpiper, reclaim our wandering attention.

Breakfast over, we lounge away a hot hour or two in the veranda of the *patio*, our cane lounge-chairs placed in the shade. The small square of greenery before us, bounded by the kitchen and servants' offices opposite, and enclosed on either side by a veranda passage and a garden-wall, masked with roses and ivy, is so characteristic of town life here, that it merits a minute description. The terrible heat of summer is over; still, with the thermometer at 75° in the shade, it is paradisiacal to enjoy this exquisite tiny garden. And how many and various flowers and shrubs are massed effectively within its narrow limits! Of palms eight lesser kinds display their fan-branches or spiky fronds, while a ninth has shot its slender stem, crowned by a drooping head, right up to the *alto* above, where its leaves

make a murmuring rustle in answer to every breeze. A young magnolia-tree casts a grateful shade farther away, and around luxuriate philodendrons, cannas, and a banana but lately heavy with fruit. Oleanders are too common to be allowed into this miniature garden ; but crimson ceibo and hibiscus are glowing brilliantly near bushes of gardenias, tuberoses, and more fragile-seeming English roses. The veranda pillars are wreathed with jessamine stars and masses of deep-hued violet Bougainvillea, here called by the far prettier name of Santa Rita ; and all round the tiny gravel paths grows an edging of various home flowers, whether carnations or violets.

Midmost of this pretty spot is a stone fountain, its basin full of goldfish that hide among papyrus reeds topped by their high feathery crowns, or under the leaves of arums and blue water plantains. But the chief attraction in my eyes is overhead, where a slight whirring sound has drawn my attention.

The central figure of the old fountain is that of a delightfully impossible cherub carrying a goose. And just where the gleaming spray falls on the weather-stained breast of this ancient fowl, a darling winged sprite is quivering in mid-air, drinking a sunlit drop or two. It is a tiny living gleam of iridescent green ; it is the solitary humming-bird of the *patio*—the Ariel of this house-arbour.

Turning within doors, one is struck by the feeling

of being in an English home. Perhaps only the glass doors to all the rooms, mosquito-curtains, and outer shutters, or *persianos*, betray the difference caused by the greater heat. Here are tall stand-lamps, screens, and deep arm-chairs and sofas; the tables are heaped with English novels, magazines, and papers—only three weeks old. Good water-colours on the walls, and portfolios full of photographs of the camp, remind one how happy are those people who have many hobbies and accomplishments. The larger *sala* across the corridor is used either as a music-room or for dancing, as its polished floor suggests. And during autumn and winter, the gay seasons, many a large party is entertained by our British Minister, the Honourable Francis Pakenham, and his wife, for there is a really numerous English society in Buenos Ayres which is the envy of the other European diplomats.

With afternoon tea, visitors drop in, ladies from the town, or pretty *quintas* in the outskirts; naval officers from the English gunboat just come down from Rio, or a German one with a Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin on board. The sailors are enthusiastic over the hospitality shown them—what with cricket-matches and polo, races, shooting and dinner parties, their stay will seem all too short; for soon they must leave for some weeks of gun practice at a less inviting spot along the coast.

Towards four o'clock it is cool enough to go out

again with pleasure. We might take a carriage and pay calls, but most of the houses will have little to describe that is novel, excepting that one or two may have their *patio* roofed over with glass and converted into a central hall or billiard-room. Most drawing-rooms display a sham fireplace with velvet overmantel and curtains, steel fender and fire-irons—only the grate and chimney are wanting, their place being supplied by a mirror.

‘Ah, it is the English who have introduced real fireplaces here,’ one is told. ‘In former days there was perhaps just one in the whole house, and often people only used a large *brasero* full of charcoal to warm themselves in winter.’

Let us rather stroll up to the tennis-court and see who may be there ; for this is at present a favourite meeting-place. On the way there are still some new street sights, if we keep our eyes open. The various big carts, for instance, hired out for carrying all manner of unsentimental loads, display amusing mottoes painted large upon them. Here passes one piled with empty wooden cases, its sides bearing the gallant declaration, ‘Me gustan las muchachas simpáticas’ (Delightful girls please me). *Simpática* is an untranslatable expression, for our word ‘sympathetic’ does not convey a tithe of the charm, winning qualities, and sweetness signified by its soft syllables. Others, again, I saw with such inscriptions as ‘Don’t bother me,’ ‘I belong to my master,’ ‘I

come and go as required.' Long may this touch of Spanish picturesqueness be retained! How different our own advertisements on rocks, and in green fields, where the eye, turning to rest and rejoice in Nature, sees—somebody's soap or pills, writ large and defacing the landscape.

But we must heed our steps, for here and there loose flagstones, over cavities suggesting drains, might easily cause a twisted ankle. Behind the high walls and wooden gates of the tennis-ground there is an animated scene. Four or five sets of players enliven the gravel courts; bystanders are drinking tea in the pretty pavilion, various ladies taking it in turn to provide the means for this indispensable afternoon rite. Some Argentinas are playing gently, wearing rather too dainty French-looking gowns; the English girls are recognizable at a glance by their dress and air: sailor hat, a shirt, serge skirt—and energy.

'*We* all try to look as different to the native ladies as possible, but many of our Englishmen have the bad taste to admire their dresses more,' said one bright young countrywoman of my own to me with slight chagrin.

So far as tennis and the skating-rink were concerned, the latter being still a favourite resort in winter time, I agreed with her. But otherwise, what is pleasing to men's eyes in feminine attire is surely likely to be what is really most becoming.

We women more often put into practice the Spanish proverb :

‘ Lo que es moda,
No incomoda ’

(That which is the mode can never incommode).

What a pity, by the way, that there should be so few English girls out here ! Men there are in plenty, so everyone tells me, at the winter balls and parties, lining the walls black. But very, very few sisters or cousins of young married Englishwomen seem to come on visits, although the journey is so easy. In consequence, the mankind mostly remain bachelors, or marry Argentinas.

Strolling home again, the sky is reddish to the very eastern horizon as from a great conflagration, for no hills obscure the glory of the sunset, which promises hot weather still. Below a very slight declivity (there are so few in this level land) gleams a brownish expanse of water—the great river broad as an inland sea. And as we feast our eyes on the beauty of the southern sky, a musical tinkling, recalling cowbells in Switzerland, sounds down the street. A cow is marching gravely along, accompanied by her calf, and at a street-door is stopped to be milked. It is the same custom one sees in Naples, and is pastoral in its simplicity and convenience. No fear of the little black-eyed *niños* in there getting their fresh milk watered, or suffering from a milch stepmother supplanting their accus-

tomed nurse. And more cows and their calves meet us in every street before we reach home in the sudden darkness that falls here after sundown, unlike the lingering twilight of the Northern hemisphere.

Some guests came to dinner, and although the cookery we were enjoying was that of an English, or, strictly speaking, an Irish feminine *chef*, the talk turned awhile for my benefit on national dishes here. Chief of these is *carne con cuero*—literally meat with the hide, which is as famous as a Scotch haggis. It is the usual roast-meat dish of out-door life in the camp or on hunting expeditions, and no race-meeting, election, or such-like public gathering is thought complete without it. On board ship a young Englishman of the languid type, who was returning to his family in the Argentine after completing an education at home, told me he considered the Royal Mail dinners ‘disgusting’; and on my demurring considerably to such a description of what seemed to others very good and certainly lavish fare, he assured me enthusiastically that to those people like himself who preferred one or two simple dishes well cooked, *carne con cuero* was delicious.

‘In the evening, after a long day in camp, the *gauchos* kill a lamb and spread-eagle it on sticks on the windward side of a fire,’ he explained. ‘As soon as the wood is burnt down, they heap the glowing embers over the meat, which is still in its skin, and

when it is cooked *there is nothing to touch it!* By this process the meat, whether lamb or even wild horseflesh—according to the description given me of a shooting-tour in the Gran Chaco, a territory almost as large as Spain, and mostly inhabited by Indians—retains all the juices that are most nutritious, and which turn to jelly when cold. On greater festive occasions, or when there is a large party, say, of hungry soldiers to be dined, a bullock is similarly roasted, with the additional peculiarity that its bones are taken out and made to feed the fire. Opinions on the merits of the roast-beef varied, however, as some of my friends were inclined to think it occasionally underdone.

One fruit may be mentioned here, with which breakfast or dinner is often begun, as it is eaten with pepper and salt. This is the *tuna*, or prickly pear. The *tuna* prickles are so sharp they require to be rubbed off before the fruit is brought to table; even then very cautious people hold it in a napkin, while eating it with a spoon, egg fashion. It is curious that the *tuna* should be most cooling, as its natural home is in barren soil or sandy desert. Still, to give an honest opinion on its merits, the flavour seemed to me little, and the seeds many.

But above all, I was interested in hearing maté talked of, the wonderfully wholesome beverage discovered by the Jesuit missionaries, called after them Jesuit's tea, and which certainly is the national drink

of South America. China or Indian tea is said to be supplanting it near seaports, or elsewhere from servants in foreign families learning to follow foreign customs. More is the pity. For maté is declared even by English doctors here to be absolutely harmless to the nerves, and one ordered it to a friend of mine for some months during a severe illness. Others have assured me that in camp they, although English, preferred it on long expeditions to tea or coffee, as more sustaining. Lastly, as all the poor people know, it is excessively cheap, and they indulge in it, we may say, at all hours during the day. Its consumption far exceeds that of coffee, 18,000 tons of yerba having been imported in 1891, as against 1,900 of coffee.*

A good many English residents in this country and in Chili, I noticed, affected to despise maté, as who should say, 'Can any good thing come out of South America?' But those dwellers in camp who used it declared its after-effects to be delicious; and an English captain of one of the mail steamers told me he had grown so fond of maté he always indulged in it when possible, finding it had a soothing effect like that produced by mild opium. The drink is made of the dried leaves and twigs of the yerba-tree which have been ground. There is no apparatus of teapot and cups. One small gourd only is needed, holding no more than one of our afternoon

* See 'Handbook of the Argentine Republic,' p. 44.

teacups, and this gourd is often set on a tiny silver tray, with a rim and mountings to match. Richer people have pure silver matés, of such various and often curious design that they are eagerly collected by Europeans. Some which I saw later on in Chili were shaped like birds—one being a lovely dove with chased plumage, its body forming the cup; another a lively little gamecock in a strawberry-bed, with some tiny chicks set on spiral silver wires fluttering round him. But most were goblet-shaped and supported on a tray by squirrels or condors.

To enjoy maté properly, the family or friends gather in a group. Boiling water is brought, probably kept hot on a *brasero*, and poured in when the maté cup has been half filled with the herb. The principal person present then begins to sip it through the silver tube, called a *bombilla*, often handsomely chased, and which is bulbous and pierced with strainer-holes at the end immersed in the fibrous mixture. There is no chance of a 'good long drink.' One only gets about as much at a time as of Turkish coffee. The gourd is again filled up with hot water, and with its *bombilla* is then passed on to the second person. Probably a fresh pinch of yerba is added for the third and fifth comers. And when the loving cup has gone all round the circle the first maté-drinker begins afresh again, and so *da capo* until everyone has had perhaps half a dozen turns. A

maté-party therefore takes time, but then there is no lack of *that*.

An old Scotch maid of Mrs. Pakenham's, who has lived in the Argentine for the last thirty years, amused us by an anecdote of her first experience in Buenos Ayres. The morning after her arrival, on looking out of the hotel-window into the *patio* below, she saw, to her surprise, a number of aged crones sitting gravely in a circle on the ground. One or two held gourds, and seemed to be sucking at these through pipes. 'Well!' soliloquized the Scotch-woman in indignant contempt, 'you are a pack of silly old women, to be blowing bubbles at your age!'

The Jesuit Fathers established yerba-growing in that district of the Argentine still called after them by the name of 'Misiones.' The brief story of the missions is sad. Invited by the Governor of Paraguay to protect his poor Indians against the cruelties of the Spanish *conquistadores*, the *padres* arrived at the end of the sixteenth century, and spread the true Christianity of peace and industry in both Paraguay and the 'Misiones' territory adjoining it. For nearly two hundred years they protected as best they could their gentle-minded people against the slave-hunters, who carried them off at times wholesale, selling 60,000 in the market-place of Rio Janeiro in two years! Cotton, yerba, mandioca, and oranges were produced in abundant crops; colleges and churches erected, some being both handsome and of large

dimensions. One church, though ruined, still displays a great flight of fifteen stone steps 150 feet long.

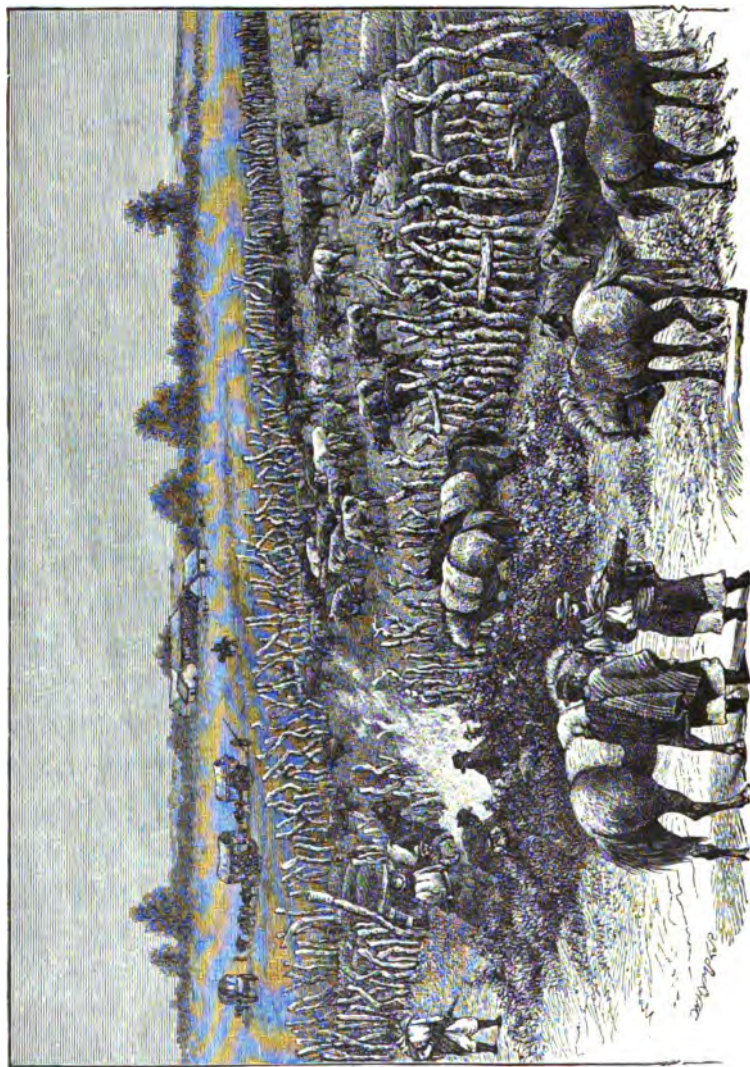
But the Jesuits' work elsewhere in the world was presumably less blameless and excellent than this, which will always remain a crown of praise to the Order. They were expelled by orders from Spain in 1740; their missions, with arsenals and workshops, were destroyed by fire, whereupon their Indian disciples fled to the woods. Still, hundreds of acres of ruins, much of cut stonework, are to be seen overgrown with palms and wild oranges. The tracks of old roads through woods now thickly tangled, and paved fording-places at streams, remain to bear witness in lonely spots that here was once a now vanished civilization.

The yerba-tree is known as the Brazilian holly (*Ilex Paraguensis*). It is a shrub about eight feet high with small close leaves, and bearing many sprouts on the stem. These are yearly pruned, the branches being as aromatic as their leaves when dried for maté. As to its mode of preparation in Paraguay, where the *yerbales* laid down by the Jesuits are said to cover 4,000 square miles, I cannot do better than quote the following from Mr. Mulhall:* 'Yerbamaté may probably supplant coffee, as it can be placed in Europe at twopence per pound. It can be prepared for market in thirty-six hours. The

* 'Handbook of the River Plate.'

leaves are slightly scorched by being passed rapidly through a fire, and then the branches or twigs are suspended in sheds open at the sides ; here they are exposed for fifteen or twenty hours to a fire of scented wood kindled beneath, after which the twigs are ground. . . . In the Reign of Queen Anne the London physicians forbade Jesuits' tea . . . but possibly they were jealous of its origin, although they certainly encouraged the use of Jesuits' bark. It is now more or less used by eighteen millions of people in South America.'

But as dinner is ended, so also may be this chapter. Still, as it is our hostess's weekly reception evening, more guests will come in later, the Italian Minister and his wife, the Duke and Duchess of Liciniano among others, liking to appear about eleven and stay chatting most agreeably till one in the morning. So only at that hour can it be said that this our day of small things in Buenos Ayres is over.



A CORRAL.

THE GRINGO'S DREAM.

A 'GRINGO'! It is a strange-sounding word, but one which soon becomes familiar in the ears of an Englishman arriving in the Argentine Republic, for he learns that he himself—in common with the German foreigners here—is a *gringo*. The term is not precisely respectful, any more than is that of *gaucho*, which one would hardly use directly, unless in contempt, to any son of the soil of that class which seems born to be everlastingly galloping about, wearing a picturesque but dirty *poncho*.*

Time was—and that, as one old resident told me of personal recollection, even only twenty years ago—when the English *gringo* was so respected here that the people were accustomed to declare in solemn asseveration, 'On the faith of an Englishman.' In those days, recounted my friend, he could go into any shop, and though personally unknown, should he not carry sufficient money about him for his

* For the same unknown reason the French are styled *gabochos*, Spaniards are *godos*, and the Italians *bachichas*.

purchases, it was only necessary to say that he would return and pay. 'An Englishman's word is as good as his money,' would be invariably the ready answer.

Now, alas! the Argentine native has learnt by experience that all the British who land on his fertile shore are not of the honest class of old; many have come for the good of their own country, and the extradition treaty is still a new thing.

The English *gringo* is certainly the chief being in this far-away land in the eyes of those at home. 'Try and learn something of our sons' chances and their welfare,' was a charge laid upon me, when leaving home, on behalf of many parents. And no wonder, when one thinks of the many fresh-faced lads whom Mother England sends out year after year to earn their livelihood for the most part on the vast grassy pampas; and that, if they have grit, by the sweat of their brows. 'What kind of life do they lead out there? Is there a fair hope of their all making fortunes? Are they likely to settle down for good and all?'

Such were the questions asked me. For letters home are apt to be brief, or, perhaps, discreetly silent, on details the old folk yearn to know. They long to catch a reflection of the bright hopes of their boys—to reckon up with these the chances of sweet success or bitter failure. They want to understand what is the *gringo's* dream.

Now, this task seemed to me hard of fulfilment, for my own stay in the Argentine was limited to a few weeks' visit before pushing on to Chili, lest the Cordilleras at the end of April should be impassable from snow. And on this new walk round the world—as one may call it—my mind had long been set, believing the route would be not only quick, but interesting, as showing a great variety of scenery in the interior, and much more of the country ways and customs than can be studied nearer the more cosmopolitan life of a seaport. (In which my forecast proved agreeably right.) Therefore, it was indeed good fortune that seemed to bring in my way, not only at the British Legation, but also during the month's stay on board ship, several pleasant acquaintances who were excellently fitted to give me the information needed. Among these were men who had themselves toiled in the Argentine during the best years of their lives, and won a good position, considerable fortune, and ripe experience.

Of several *estancieros*, or gentlemen farmers, whom I met, one in especial was universally allowed to be among the very best authorities in the Argentine on farming; and I will therefore mainly quote his opinions thereupon, as farming is by far the most important occupation for Englishmen here. Also I gladly thank him for the thought and hours so kindly placed at my service in writing down the results of over twenty

years' experience, during which he trod most of the ups and downs in the path of toil before attaining to his present position, that of a prosperous land-owner.

His creed may be briefly given as follows :

'I believe in the future of the Argentine as one of the finest farming countries in the world; that stock-producing has been, and will continue to be, the chief business of the capitalist; but that wheat-growing will increase ever more and more, and make the fortune of the labourer.'

To begin with the stock, then, of which in England we have some vague ideas connected with grassy pampas, lasso-throwing, and branding.

As might be expected of a land where the flocks and herds are numerous as those of Laban and Jacob, cattle and sheep are the chief riches of the Argentine Republic; wool and hides the principal products. The aim, therefore, of every young man coming out to try farming here is to become a part or sole owner of an *estancia*, which answers to a ranch in some parts of the United States, or, perhaps, a run in Australia. These *estancias* vary greatly in size; some may be a mere square league, while one friend of mine owns at present 80,000 acres! This he modestly thinks too much for his needs, and hopes to sell some 20,000 acres during the next three years, 'if all goes well.' As the *estancias*, so also do the herds upon them vary in size. One poor man may

own only a sorry number of 200 beasts, while his neighbour—but this would be a rare instance—may glance with swelling pride at a splendid army of 100,000 cattle—a horned multitude!

To gain a fair idea of the prospects and possessions of most Englishmen who are *estancieros* in Argentina, let us take an average owner in illustration. Such a one would possess from 2,000 to 3,000 head of cattle grazing over the pastures surrounding the roof of his new home, which probably looks somewhat like a bungalow. Should his *estancia* be a sheep-farm, however, he would own about 20,000 in his flock, sheep being, of course, more numerous in proportion to the size of the estate than cattle. I have been told of as many as 150,000 sheep being owned by one rich man, in this respect like unto him of Nathan's parable. Again, a tenant farmer may be striving after contentment with only so small a flock as 1,000, answering to the ewe lamb of Scripture.

But what size, the reader will ask, as I did, would be the *estancia* of the before-quoted average owner? Well, most probably about 20,000 acres, or what is commonly called 'a three leagues lot.' There are a good many holdings of three leagues square, because this was a very frequent size for Government originally to sell. And an owner to this amount would be probably well-to-do. He could afford to indulge in the luxury of a manager while

he himself took frequent trips home ; nay, he might even spend much of his time in England.

At present the chief breeds of cattle on the Argentine *estancias* are Herefords and shorthorns, but the shorthorns are by far the more esteemed of these two. It is also noteworthy that the aim, or at least the tendency, of most cattle-owners nowadays is towards improving the quality of their stock rather than increasing their numbers. What becomes of these vast multitudes of cattle? is the next question. Well, the *saladeros*, of one of which I made mention when describing my first arrival at Buenos Ayres, can answer for the disposal of a great number in the form of tinned meat and beef essences. And the export of hides, as of wool, is very great, the cow-hides exported even in 1841 being reckoned at 3,940,000 in number ; while of meat there was in the same year over 62,000 tons sent out of the country. Likewise a trade in live cattle with Brazil is considerable and daily increasing ; whilst with England also it is beginning and showing signs of success. As to sheep, there has always been a large trade in frozen mutton, and apparently will be a still greater one, for this sale is growing always larger.

The amount of labour needed for running such a cattle farm as that of our average owner is small ; to my surprise, my friendly *estanciero* assured me that he found five, or even four, men were quite

sufficient to attend to a square league. It was a safe calculation, he considered, that more than ten times as many would be necessary on a wheat-farm of the same size. But of wheat and its prospects more anon.

Lastly, the number of horses on this same average *estancia* might be reckoned at 400. Many of these would be wild—the brood mares, for instance, which are never tamed, as also all those foals still too young to be broken in for use.

These facts were interesting to me as illustrating the position of many an *estanciero* who had been 'out here' some years and had had luck. But what about the beginners? What is the best advice that a successful man like my informant could give to lads at home eager to make the most of their portions as younger sons, the latter most likely being but a small capital?

The answer was straight and unhesitating.

'This is a splendid country for young fellows who have two thousand pounds or upwards of their own. But there is certainly no good in their coming out without any capital. What is best of all is, that they should go without their money at first and learn experience by hard labour. Let them work, say for two years, at labourers' wages—work with the men, but take their meals with the "bosses." Then they can send home for their little fortune, and begin on their own account with a fair chance.'

The custom of asking premiums with pupils, though a new idea, is already a good deal in vogue here. Eighty to a hundred pounds for the first year is considered a fair sum to ask until the pupil has *learnt Spanish* and can make himself useful, for a knowledge of Spanish is absolutely essential. True, half the Argentine population and their children may be reckoned as foreigners to the soil, although the children when born here are classed as Argentines; still, Spanish is the one means of communication between all these different European immigrants, and will undoubtedly continue to be the language of the country.

And now a word or two on what the life is like. The conditions of camp-life have altered greatly within the last fifteen years, I am told. Formerly one could count the different *estancias* where the ordinary comforts of existence were to be found, while to-day most people try to live as comfortably and agreeably as is possible under the circumstances. As regards food, the best of meat, also milk, butter, and eggs, are to be had almost for the asking, and vegetables of all kinds can be grown at a trifling cost. Then as to the daily round: it seems to swing on cheerily, according to my friend, who declared that, for a young fellow interested in his business, 'camp-life is far from a bad one.'

Up with, or rather before, the dawn, a cup of tea and some bread-and-butter follow on the quick task

of dressing. Then out of doors at once into the fresh, cool air, while the red sun is only preparing to show his face on a level with the hardly aroused earth ; for work here begins with sunrise and ends with sunset. Back again to the house at eight o'clock in summer-time for breakfast ; then more work till noontide, when the hungry appetites of the Britishers enjoy a heavy lunch. In the long days of hot weather this is generally followed by a siesta, or at all events a rest of a couple of hours, that is very welcome, and even necessary. After this the cup of tea, so dear to the British heart, is a frequent afternoon custom ; then once more to work until sundown—that is to say, night in these regions. As to the indoor life, my friend, himself a bachelor, expressed it from his own point of view with amusing briefness.

‘It is very much the same as in most of our colonies,’ he said ; ‘pleasant enough if there are ladies, and wearisome to a degree if there are none!’

Domestic servants in this camp-life seem to be one of the chief difficulties. The supply of English servants is small, while the class of Italians and Spanish who emigrate here are seldom clean in their habits. Certainly the Basques earn high praise on all sides, as being excellent in every way, clean and willing. But they can now seldom be persuaded to take service with any but their own

countrymen, who almost always thrive, put by savings, and become owners of land and of sheep in a few years, or work in some manner on their own account, either at wire-fencing, brick-making, or other contract labour. On the *estancias* all the heavy farm-work used to be done entirely by Basques twenty years ago; nowadays hardly a labourer of them can be had, to the regret of the owners. But here the law of compensation seems to be once more applied by Dame Nature. For whereas a few years ago none of the natives would dream of fatiguing themselves with any task except such as might be accomplished on horseback, like the duties of herdsmen, yet now these same *peones* are taking the place the Basques used to fill in the country, and make quiet, good labourers. Nevertheless, the great bulk of the agricultural work in the Argentine is at present done by Italians, though many French, Swiss, and Germans are also engaged in farming.

The northern Italians are the best and chief colonists in the opinion of two or three of my informants. Upon arriving, they proceed to work on a share system until they have gained enough to buy land for themselves. They are sober, live on the most frugal fare, and the supply of them from Italy seems endless. Lastly, wages are at present cheap, while the premium on gold remains so high as it is, the paper dollar being only worth from thirteen to fifteen pence, instead of four shillings and sixpence.

What a splendid crop of thistles are to be seen on many of these *estancias* ! Not even Switzerland can boast such specimens, nine to ten feet high, as I saw standing in withered armies, and which must look beautiful when in their glory of purple blossom at mid-summer—that is, Christmas. But it is on a smaller thistle, in reality a wild artichoke, that the little *batitu*, or sandpiper, fattens to toothsome plumpness. Those black oily seeds are also greedily licked up by the sheep, which will grow fat on them in apparently barren ground. It was quite a surprise and pleasure to hear that thistles in the Argentine have found their appointed use in Nature's economy, and are not mere tares of the field. On the contrary, they are highly valued on sheep *estancias* as a sign of dry land, but more because of the shelter their height and serried ranks afford the sheep. When the *pampero*—the cutting wind blowing from the South Pole—sweeps over the bleak camp where are no bushes, trees, or hillocks and hollows to afford shelter, the poor sheep come racing to that given by the friendly thistle groves, as we may call these, and cower beneath them. Several of my friends told me that when on horseback they measured these thistles as higher than themselves, and that they had often seen 'rides cut through them, as through woods at home.'

And now what of the grain industry ? On board ship, as we neared the Argentine shore, it seemed

to me that all the passengers who had a heavy stake in the country 'talked wheat,' and thought of the harvest. The topic was evidently of absorbing interest, and some of them explained to me the reason why. 'Our chief aim in life out in South America is to make our pile; the one great occupation is a scramble for the dollar! And wheat in the last ten years has begun to take an equal place with wool.' I was beginning to understand that we were approaching a land where, as regards us English, the various subjects which at home fill men's minds, as politics, church, law, army and navy, and many more, are all reduced to one—that of money-making in a foreign country. This somewhat dull mass of intention is brightened by the fire of family affection when men are married; slightly varied for the others by Sunday-afternoon cricket near towns, and polo-playing in the camp, when neighbours ride great distances to meet each other. 'It is our *only* holiday, and we often have no church to go to,' was explained in deprecation. Therefore, as wheat-growing is a chief means to this aim of my countrymen, I listened with attention to glowing descriptions of its future in the Argentine.

Ten years ago wheat was brought into the country, now nearly a million tons are exported; nay, a rise soon to a million and a half is confidently looked for. The price is low, yet the wheat area is rapidly increasing, and pasture is being broken up

where suitable for wheat. Such land—good freehold land—can be had at from ten shillings to one pound an acre, within two hundred miles of a river-port or seaport. And the speakers triumphantly pointed out to me the natural advantages possessed here over those of a great part of North America. California, they said, sent her wheat round by Cape Horn.

These virgin wheat-lands can be used *from five to ten years*, after which they are being laid down with lucerne (called here *alfalfa*) for permanent pasture, which is, I was assured, as fine as any in the world. Indeed, the enthusiastic praise evoked by the mention of lucerne was infectious, especially when the sight of its green growth rejoiced one's eyes in a dry land, where no water had been for many weeks. On some *estancias*, such as that of the B.'s, which I before described, several successive crops of *alfalfa* are taken in the year; but it is mostly grazed, and will last thus from seven to ten years. After this, the land is in splendid condition for the plough to prepare it for fresh wheat. Lucerne (or *alfalfa*) hay is now becoming a large trade to Brazil, and some growers are turning their minds to the question of sending it 'home,' as they simply said; but the freight would be heavy, as, however compressed, there is so much bulk for weight in the hay.

Only twenty years ago these wheat-lands were still unoccupied, or in the possession of the Indians.

Even ten years ago men were barely beginning to bring them into cultivation. And it was about this same time that owners of *estancias* still liked to hold large tracts of camp grazed over by an inferior class of wild cattle and sheep. To-day these ideas are changing. *Estancieros* are learning that true advantage lies in their owning less land, but a better stock. The risk is greatly reduced—and what terrible risks they must run, between drought, camp-fires, locusts, and inundations!—while the product is three times as much on the same average, and the taxes fewer.*

All this applies chiefly to land in the north of the province of Buenos Ayres, south of Cordoba and the province of Santa Fé. In the south, however, of this great province of Buenos Ayres lies an enormous area of magnificent natural pasture-land grazed over by sheep and cattle; and though this could doubtless produce wheat in great quantities, it has not yet attracted colonists to nearly the same extent as the north. Perhaps this is owing to a colder climate and uncertain frosts; but another reason may lie in

* In Buenos Ayres 'the northern camps are mostly high, and sometimes visited with drought; more than four million horses, cows and sheep perished in the drought of 1859. The southern camps are low, and so subject to inundation that, in 1880, the Salado drowned a million sheep and cattle. . . . Locusts are at long intervals a dreadful visitation, destroying crops, fields, trees, and sometimes thatched roofs of houses.'—'Handbook of the River Plate.'

the fact of emigrants following each other like sheep, and the Italians, who began to colonize in the north, cling closely together.

These cattle *estancias* are on a bigger scale than the wheat *chacras*, for the latter is the future of the poorer man, but stock-raising that of the capitalist. Still, wheat-lands, though at first, supposed to be of moderate worth, are now found to pay well. Pasture, on the contrary, was bought, and is at its full interest-producing value.

Besides these lands before-named, the province also of Entre Rios (literally, 'Between the Rivers'), though till lately much neglected, is said to be well worth attention, and its wheat is of the best quality in the Republic. Speaking of these districts, my friend, the prosperous *estanciero*, emphatically declared: 'For any young fellow with from two to five thousand pounds, who will attend to his work—as he would be compelled to do to earn a bare living in any of our English colonies—the Argentine offers facilities far superior to those of any other part of the world at the present time. At least, that is my opinion.'

But what of the unstable Government? I questioned.

'Well,' was the reply, 'a Spanish, and therefore, I hold, a bad, Government is a great drawback, though not so serious to the individual as might be supposed. But, talking of English lads, mark this!

Were the Argentine Government believed sound, capital would at once flow in streams into the country, and where would the small investor be then? Even now what good openings there are for large capitalists! Land in the south of Buenos Ayres can now be bought to let again and return an interest of from five to ten per cent., with the almost certainty, in my belief, that its intrinsic value must increase, as our experience shows these virgin lands keep improving in the quality and quantity of their grasses, and carry proportionately more stock. Then, for any man at home who can afford to wait a few years for his interest, there is land in plenty to be bought to-day that must double in value the moment railway communication reaches it.'

There are also other openings than farming for 'our boys' to be got here. The banks, railways, gas, electric, water, and telephone companies are all, or nearly so, in English hands, although Italians, French, and Spanish very greatly outnumber us in population. Some other rural industries, such as mills, have been attempted, but were generally failures. This is hardly surprising, as the sanguine would-be millers did not pretend to know their business. Said one informant to me, laughing :

'Hitherto it has been a case of the engineer turning to farming; the blacksmith carpentering; the farmer railway-contracting.'

Which shows that in this comparatively new

country the competition has not been keen. Many minor industries are now starting, and ought to succeed under the high import duties. But their starters should have *practical knowledge*. The battle is to the strong!—in health, brains, industry, and a fair competence.

The ardour my friends showed in praising this Egypt in which they toil of free-will for the flesh-pots—and hard toil it is, and that for a good many years—might have stirred me into an eager belief that this was indeed a land of silver, but that a cold shiver of recollection brought the recent Argentine crisis unpleasantly back to memory, so I spoke of it.

‘Ah, yes!’ came reflectively in answer, yet with stanch conviction still. ‘People at home keep on labouring under a painful impression that our industries are being paralyzed, because they know the Government is almost worthless. They cannot understand that now is even a safer time to invest money in land than were the country still enjoying the full tide of prosperity. No old resident here would dream of risking his money in a Government security; but in England our friends have not learnt to distinguish between that and the land.’

On the whole, therefore, it seemed to be the general opinion that the outlook of the Argentine Republic is good, in spite of the bad Government. The country, all my friends declared, has the very

finest pastoral and agricultural land in the world ; also emigration from Europe, especially from Italy, continues to flow in, in a steady stream. And so the hopeful spirits anticipate that we may see the Argentine replacing America as the storehouse to provide Europe with meat and wheat. Already it can compete favourably with Australia and New Zealand, for it is nearer England, and its land is cheaper.

These statements were made to me without reserve ; but while repeating them I emphatically disclaim further responsibility. Too many Englishmen have already sown their gold in this land and reaped failure !

When all the foregoing has been said, there still remains to know how and where the English *gringo* hopes to enjoy his money when he has made it. Perhaps a conversation between two old *gringos* and an inquiring mind, at which I assisted, may briefly illustrate this.

Inquirer (meditatively asking): 'But what is the end to all this toil ? Money is merely a means. Is it to settle down on a big *estancia*, to call the land by your name, and leave it to your children ?'

Both gringos (speaking together): 'Certainly not. It is to get out as quickly as possible. Make our money—and leave the country.'

Inquirer (in some surprise): 'Why ?'

Pro: 'Because, simply, the conditions of life are disagreeable.'

Con: 'All rubbish! He is ungrateful and hard to please. Still (*musingly*), although I can't quite say why, it is true.'

Inquirer: 'What is true, please?'

Con: 'That nobody makes a home, except some few whose fathers were shepherds, or working men, and who know nothing of English life. No one says, "I shall end my days here, please God, for it is a good country for my children to spend their lives in"—as they do, say, in New Zealand. The English colony is composed of exiles and a few birds of passage. We pass our days working to get home.'

Pro: 'It is all on account of the wretched Government. One can't alter that, unless we have our wish and *the foreigner gets a vote* without losing his own status as an Englishman.'

Con: 'Yes, but the Italians are more numerous than we are, and they don't want one! All they want is to get home with enough money to buy a little land in Italy—that is their dream. *I* think them dishonest and selfish.'

Pro: 'We are all selfish. At least they are sober and hard-working.'

Inquirer: 'But in what way does the Government annoy you?'

Both gringos (in eager alternate sentences): 'In a hundred ways, besides the sense of insecurity. For instance, in the camp, what between *alcaldes*,

comisarios, and one petty official after another, one cannot do anything without leave—not so much as sell a cow to a friend without a stamp. It is all *papel sellado*—stamped paper. And these small tyrants have it in their power to be so intensely disagreeable to any neighbour who offends them that his existence in camp can be made a burden. He will be warned that his wire fences are out of order, refused permission to make certain improvements, and generally worried.'

Inquirer: 'And what is the attitude of the Argentines themselves towards foreigners?'

Pro: 'On the whole it is good. They know that Italian labour and English gold are the making of the country. Some few small papers snap in a currish way at the fat dividends of the *gringos*, but they are not worth consideration.'

Inquirer: 'The Indian element does not, apparently, need to be reckoned with?'

Con: 'No, the aborigines are fast dying out, or being driven north or south. You will see some still in the army. They will soon only partly survive in the *gauchos*, or three-quarter breeds, who are our camp lower strata, and the *peones*, who are the lowest.'

It is cheering to remember that if our self-exiled *gringos* lead often solitary lives, theirs is at least a healthy existence. In a country 2,300 miles long, stretching from Bolivia to Tierra del Fuego, the

southern provinces will naturally be cold, and part of the northern ones almost tropical. But if the summers from December to March are hotter than those in Northern Europe, the winter season is invigorating, although snow only falls in the south and on the Andes. Imagine a country as big as Great Britain, France, Spain, Italy, and part of Germany! Naturally, it is as varied in climate as diversified in features. There are the vast grassy pampas of Buenos Ayres south and west, where a man standing on the ground will see as far and freely to the ring of the horizon as if he were in a boat at sea, the sea of grass being utterly devoid of tree or bush for miles round. Again, the various forests in the Gran Chaco cover some 60,000 square miles, the hunting-grounds of the surrounding Indians, and are infested with pumas and jaguars (or lions and tigers, as they are here called), as well as deer, wild horses, and pigs; ant-bears, antelopes, and ostriches. And friends told me of visits to pleasant *estancias* in other districts, where their rides seemed to be through English scenery—thorn brakes and dimpled hills and dells. Civilization, through its handmaiden Agriculture, is also even now perceptibly altering the Argentine climate—and for the better. One *estanciero* assured me that not only did the planting of gum-trees attract rain, but that in his belief—perhaps a mistaken one—the breaking up of pasture did so likewise. A friend of his tried

wheat, against warnings, in a dry district. Some rain fell, and he was cheered by the result ; so, although the neighbours jeered, he sowed still more wheat next year. Proportionately more rain fell, and since then for some years he has been successful. During my brief stay some of the newspapers noticed the infrequency of violent dust storms and rain storms compared with those which played havoc formerly.

Besides much sunshine, there is another pleasure in Argentine life especially dear to Englishmen—that of riding. In camp a man may gallop from morning till night, using almost as many horses as he pleases ; while even in town this delight can refresh the jaded toilers before or after office hours. Where else in the world—excepting Chili—can clerks in banks or mercantile houses buy capital hacks for five pounds to ten pounds, and keep them at about fifteen dollars a month ?

One hears strange stories here of successes and failures, one among which was specially striking, as illustrating the contrasting fates of four men. Some land which two friends had bought near a river mouth for two thousand pounds turned out to be the very site needed for a port, and they soon sold it to a couple of speculators in the time of the 'boom' for two hundred thousand pounds. The buyers gave one hundred and sixty thousand pounds in cash, with a mortgage for the remainder. Then came the

Argentine crisis. The port was left unfinished, the two speculators found themselves unable to pay the remainder of their debt, and were ruined, while the original owners are living in Europe—rich. Again, the *estanciero* once before mentioned as owning 80,000 acres had made a good fortune, and gone home to settle down in an estate in England before the golden days of the boom. After the crisis, when he learnt by letters from his manager that his cows could only be sold at ten shillings each, instead of from three to four pounds, he promptly returned with his family, and again settled down to life in the camp.

‘I have lost forty thousand pounds, yet I still believe in the Argentine as the country of the future,’ he declared to me hopefully. Then, unconsciously echoing other speakers whom I have quoted, he added, ‘Only wait until the foreigner gets a vote without losing his own status, and all will be well. The Radical party are already willing for this—they may yet carry it through.’

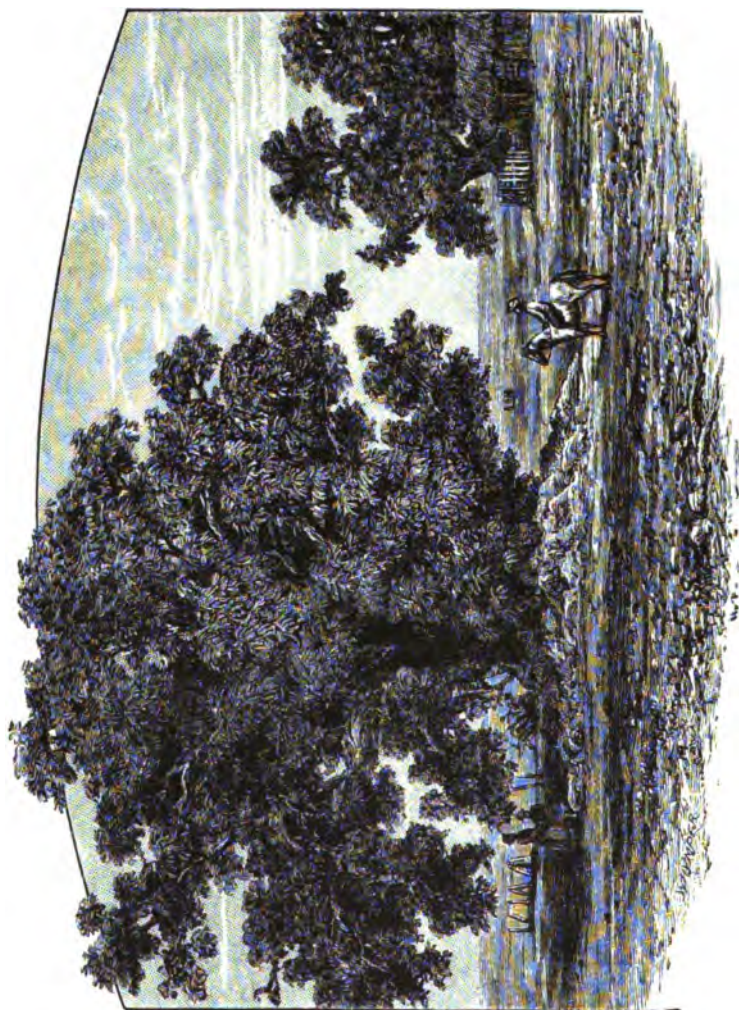
The great excitement of the cattle-farms are the *rodeos*, a term used when the stock is enclosed for the purposes of dividing and branding them. One heard much of the dangerous delight in these scenes, when all onlookers must be on the watch to gallop out of the way of a bull’s mad rush. Even amateurs sometimes share the day’s hot and dusty joys of ‘rounding up’ the cattle to be lassoed by dexterous

hands, flung down in the corral, and thereby stunned to powerlessness. These sights I could not stay to see ; the autumn was too far advanced. But in Chili there might be chances of seeing the same thing on some of the great *haciendas*.

So with this chapter we may take leave of the Argentine *gringos*, hoping many of them may be able to retire, having made the fifteen hundred to two thousand a year that appears to be the average fortune which most hope to realize. Of these fairly lucky men the pleasant suburbs, which may be called Greater London, know several groups—friends who, after being old neighbours in the Argentine, have settled down at home near each other, thus wisely avoiding any first feeling of loneliness on returning, and of having lost touch with people in England during long years of absence. Several of these one heard discussed. Some missed their work, it was said, and made meals their only milestones in the idle days, when ‘they did not know, poor old chaps ! what to do with themselves.’ Others, again, who had never ceased to cultivate congenial pursuits and hobbies in the money-making time—whether gardening, astronomy, turning at a lathe, or so forth—were as happy as possible.

As I write this in Chili, three months after my stay in the Argentine, the following legend has been told me as the traditional origin of that puzzling word *gringo*. Two Englishmen, this sets forth,

were riding years ago up to Santiago in days when Englishmen were less well known than now. And as they rode on their way they sang 'Green grow the rushes, O,' whereupon *greengoes*—for an *r* more or less matters little to *huaso's* or *gauchó's* ear—the natives called them, this being the pronunciation of *gringoes*. So, if this tale be true, these same young men must have crossed, still singing, over the Cordilleras by the Uspallata Pass, and so down by smiling Mendoza town, with its rushing brooks and green trees, and over the great pampa, stretching away for leagues, even to Buenos Ayres port on the wide La Plata.



OMBU-TREE.

KEEPING THE BALL GOING.

It was a hot Sunday morning as we all came out of the English church after noontide. A German Protestant service had been held earlier within the same walls—a sympathetic but distinctly stuffy accommodation.

‘And now,’ said my hostess, ‘we will drive out to a polo match in the afternoon. Sunday is the only English holiday here, and it is an established custom for the cricket or other matches to be held on Sunday afternoons.’

Accordingly, towards three o'clock the mulatto coachman was at the door. On my appearance he promptly suppressed a cigarette. This was a sign of good training; many another here would have smoked it.

Belgrano is the most fashionable suburb of Buenos Ayres, and its polo-ground a popular resort. We drove thither through the rough-paved, tram-lined streets, past the Recoleta cemetery and its embowering park, where there is the only slightly

rising ground I noticed in all the city, and that is brightened by gleams of water and a variety of scarlet and crimson blossoming trees and shrubs. Leaving behind the rows of flat-roofed low houses, with their high doors and windows, we passed a few really fine *quintas*, standing in their own little grounds, one of these villas being decorated on an upper ledge with almost life-size stone animals, among which a cow and a humped-up cat, both equally huge, especially tickled one's sense of the ludicrous. This Noah's ark and its neighbours were deserted, their owners being nearly all bankrupt since the Boom.

This Boom time seems indeed unlikely to be forgotten in Argentine history; for as we drove farther, while a sharp breeze sprang up, to right rose the handsome and imposing buildings of the waterworks, also a failure, it is said, since that date, when they were erected on a magnificent scale.

Two miles out of town lies Palermo Park; but the increasing wind and its accompanying dust hardly allowed one to look up enough to admire a wonderfully wide *avenida*, studded with double rows of electric lamp-posts, diminishing in noble perspective to the brown river-estuary. In that feverish time when British investors poured their gold into Argentine hands with a blind confidence that any enterprise in this Tom Tiddler's ground would repay them from seven per cent. upwards—

in that briefly gorgeous holiday for the Republic *all* these electric lamps shone on summer nights. The rank and fashion of Buenos Ayres streamed out here in hundreds of splendid carriages that paraded up and down in slow procession, and a stranger might have fancied himself in some European capital. Alas! nowadays the town can only afford to light half its lamps, and far, far fewer carriages move at the fashionably funereal pace along the *avenida* before or after dinner, according to the season.

The Palermo Park is fine and extensive, but we only skirted it this day, passing the racecourse. Here a crowd was watching some races, while outside the railings meek saddle-horses were tied up by twenties and thirties, and belated sightseers came cantering on long-tailed nags, often two men on one steed.

But now the sky had darkened, and the high wind and flying dust so increased that it was a matter of difficulty to keep hats, or even bonnets, from taking flight, or to open one's eyes for occasional glimpses.

'There is an *ombu*-tree! Look at it! It is the only kind of big tree you will see in all the country round here, and very few there are,' exclaimed one of my companions, who was slightly sheltered under the lee of the coachman's box. Looking, therefore, though at once half blinded, I caught sight of a noble

tree resembling a Spanish chestnut, of great girth, with massive gnarled roots and a splendidly heavy head. Its appearance was patriarchal, so it was not surprising to hear that the shade of the *ombu* makes a summer parlour for the house which is generally attached to it; while, should this be a *rancho*, the poor folk cook and eat, sew, and lead half their domestic lives around its trunk. 'Hay ombu' (There is an *ombu*-tree) may be read added to the advertisement of a house as a great attraction. Nevertheless, the *ombu's* use begins and ends here. It is neither good for timber nor even for firewood, the fibre being as light and friable as tinder.

Presently we found the carriage turning into the polo-field, and so alighted, battling with our skirts, while one or two gentlemen hurried forward to greet us—at least one straw hat hopping wildly before its owner. It was a boon to find comparative shelter in the wooden stand, with about a dozen ladies and a good many of the stronger sex, while tea was offered to everyone by the hostess for the day, neighbours volunteering in turn for this post at such-like friendly gatherings.

In front of the stand stretched no grassy lawn, but a bare brown ground, where a mimic battle seemed going on, the combatants charging amidst rolling clouds of dust raised from the dry earth at each stroke of their ponies' flying feet.

But who could, with smarting, streaming eyes,

descrie colours or belts in yonder reddish whirling dust-haze, which sometimes obscured half a pony completely, and always entirely hid the ball? When the match was over and the players came up to the stand, they seemed remarkably loath to approach the ladies—an unusual feature here. But their appearance gave a sufficient explanation, for the blackness of a sweep hardly describes the grime left by heat and dust on their faces. Nevertheless, this was not a 'real' dust-storm, I was assured—far, far from that! It appeared that for a year back no one remembered playing on so horrid a day, while after rain I ought to see how green the lawn would show! (This was the first time I noticed how unusual the weather could be, as if in mockery of the passing stranger. But later on in Chili the same fate oddly accompanied me ; at least, so the residents said.)

Dust or none, polo flourishes in the Argentine ; for ponies are cheap and fast, while hardly a better choice of level ground could be found in the world. Although the game is of comparatively recent introduction, there are already twenty-eight clubs, and it is rapidly spreading in the camp, wherever it is possible to find enough players. A good deal of talk about horse-stealing was going on in the stand. The lady who gave us tea had lost her pet horse a short time ago—but this seemed scarcely strange, for the *peon* in charge had tied it *outside* the stable-door on a hot night, though certainly within an

enclosure. Another narrator chimed in with the experience of his best pony having been also taken, but he was lucky enough to recognize it some months later in a tramcar, and, his brand being still visible, he claimed it. This was a surprising 'find,' as Buenos Ayres is big, and its tramcars legion. A worse trick of the thieves is simply to sell a horse to be boiled down for grease. As to the police, or *vigilantes*, they are quite indifferent about such trifles—if, indeed, as some people darkly suggest, they are not friends and former comrades of the offenders. It is a common thing for English residents to declare that the police are recruited among gaol-birds; and certainly the worst convicts are pardoned and let loose on society again in the Argentine after the merest farce of imprisonment—so everyone agrees. The branding on every animal here is a great disfigurement to the horses, but is enforced by law. Whenever a horse changes hands, a *guia* is given, or certificate describing its previous markings, to which the new owner immediately adds his own monogram. Thus some horses' flanks look like ruins visited by picnic-parties. Even one hideous brand might be a drawback to their selling well if exported to Europe—a project that has been once or twice already rather unsuccessfully tried.

On our way home, as we passed through the pretty suburb of Belgrano, its villas nestling in flowers, and its church proud of a really splendid

dome, we now noticed watermarks on the walls, waist-high, left by the flood of last week's thunder-storm—or possibly waterspout. On board ship we had felt something of its force, the rain pouring into the music-saloon, that was soon hung round with buckets and blankets ; but out here people waded knee-deep in their drawing-rooms, and, apparently, must have been forced to try swimming in the streets. When it does rain in South America—it rains !

To reconcile me to the still worse dust-wind in returning, which has left a lively remembrance as a new experience it were a thousand pities to easily forget, true tales were recounted by the rest of the party as to *real* dust-storms.

When one is first sighted at the end, say, of some street in the town here, it appears like an approaching black wall topped with lurid red, and folk rush into shelter and close their doors and windows. One of our party was almost caught in one whilst shopping this summer, and had only time—so quickly it came on—to rush down a street obscured to midnight darkness and enter the ladies' club before the big outer portals were closed. If shut out, she might have beaten in vain at the various heavy street doors without being heard, or possibly opened to. Also about the same time some friends of my hostess, who were living on an *estancia*, suffered severely from a dust-storm. Possibly there was no

time to close their *sala* windows, or they may have been absent for the day and the servants careless. At any rate, dust was blown in so great quantities into the pretty sitting-room that it needed men with spades working all next morning to excavate the buried apartment, like unto one in Pompeii. In her disgust and grief, the mistress of the *estancia* declared she would return to Europe immediately, and no longer endure such climatic freaks.

Again, the manager of one of the chief railways told me that his line was covered this summer by a dust-storm in one place to the height of a metre, and that, as rain followed, the dust caked into mud, requiring a number of navvies and hard work to dig it away. And this reminds me that locust-flights often stop trains by falling on the lines, which their slippery little bodies soon make greasy. A plague of grasshoppers was similarly witnessed by one of my acquaintances who had crossed from 'the other side,' viz., Chili. After leaving Mendoza some distance, the train pulled up, and it was found that grasshoppers had fallen on the ground and rails in so great a quantity it was impossible to proceed. A number of passengers were obliged to help some men from a neighbouring station to brush the insects off for a mile or so before the train could go on.

'See!' interrupted one of my companions, as we now reached a particularly wide, solitary-looking

stretch of road about a mile and a half from town ; 'we were telling you of our winter mud. This is where a lady we know had her carriage stuck fast last year, returning from a ball at Belgrano, and she was obliged to walk into Buenos Ayres at two o'clock at night in her ball-gown and satin slippers.' It is no unusual thing for guests to arrive an hour or so late for dinner in winter, thanks to having got mired in a *pantano* on the way.

Upon reaching home, it was a great relief to wash the dust off our faces, but for days afterwards one kept discovering overlooked deposits in the most hidden folds of one's clothes, in spite of strenuous brushing given them by that treasure in this easy-going land—a conscientious Scotch maid.

Violent dust-storms are much less frequent now, people say, than they used to be some seven-and-twenty years ago. The Minister told me that, during his first stay here as a young secretary of Legation, he often saw houses so thickly plastered with mud, when rain followed the dust-storms, that they needed scraping and repainting.

On this present mild occasion the subsequent rain waited kindly a few days. Then, as if the climate wished to impress upon me that it does nothing here by halves, down came a shower one morning. A water-tank up in the sky seemed to have burst ; and in next to no time there were pools and lakelets lying on the flat roofs around and in the *patio*. It

had the refreshing effect of cooling the air, so the last mosquitoes of summer left us in peace. Lately they seemed to be maddened by their solitary lives to a ferocity which, one sorely felt, called for a Government order to muzzle them.

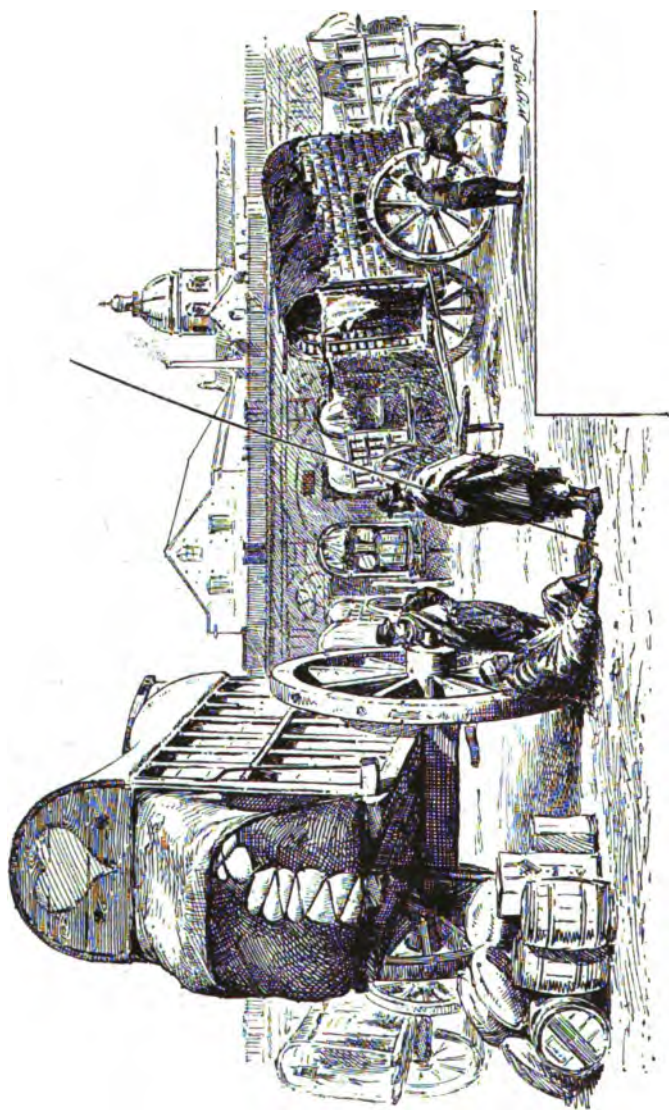
On the following Sunday we went to a cricket match at Flores, which is, perhaps, next to Belgrano, the favourite suburb of Buenos Ayres. After the rain the outlying streets and roads were—well, instructive. One really appreciates the blessing of European civilization when jolting in and out of holes in the paving and avoiding deep puddles in which a mother goose and her goslings might easily enjoy a swim. Then one's mind is taken back in history to the days when English highways may have been just as impassable with quagmires as these. The carriage turned down one road, resembling a ploughed field, our swarthy coachman keeping carefully on the tram-lines: for all carriages here, even hackney ones, are expressly built to allow of easy stolen runs on these, delightful when the big car is behind, but most annoying when an angrily tooting horn ahead obliges you to be jerked off the smooth lines on to the horrible road again. Probably the tramcar shareholders get less dividends owing to this extra wear and tear; but, then, they must be glad to feel themselves public benefactors! Our heavy landau, I may here remark, was of native manufacture, for no ordinary English-built carriage

could stand the strain to which it would be put here.

Presently, as we bowled along, a man riding towards us grinned, raised his hand, and called out 'No se puede' (It can't be done). Alas! it was true, the road was too bad ahead—so shouted in confirmation the driver of a high cart which just then creaked painfully in approach. All carts here struck me as being ridiculously high, with gigantic wheels; but the reason of this was now apparent, for the very axle-trees of this one were thickly mud-coated, while the leader and wheeler, which are always needed to draw such a cart, had sunk above their knees in mud, poor beasts! Round we perforce turned, therefore, this involving an extra mile or two, driving past some notably big convents and many ornate *quintas*, occasionally resembling children's toys with their bright colours and fanciful shapes.

Arrived at last at the English cricket-field, we found cricket going on. There were also tennis sets close by in full swing.

It was a cheery gathering, very typical of life in the Argentine, and the many and varied English faces at each of these sociable meetings was a constant surprise to me. People were all eager to talk of the great cricketing event of the past summer, when in December (mark the time of year!) an Argentine picked team crossed the Andes to play



ARGENTINE CARTS.

the men in Chili, where they had received an enthusiastic welcome.

Several ladies rode up to see the cricket, for all who live here are horsewomen as a matter of course, if not of necessity ; but the best rider there was the smallest. She was a little girl about nine years old, who apparently grew scornful of watching her small brothers, or friends, instructing their nursemaid in shrill Spanish how to bowl to them with a tennis-ball. So she dashed down her large picture-hat on a bench and marched off alone to where some horses were tied to a wire fence. Choosing a side-saddled pony among these, possibly well known to her, she proceeded to let down the stirrup with a scientific air, till, after frequent trials, she could reach it with her toe. Then up she hopped, retightened the stirrup, and galloped away from tiresome society into the delicious freedom of the meadow's farthest limits, careering round and round, her white frock, pink sash, and golden hair flying loose. No one seemed to pay the little equestrian any special attention ; children ride here from the time they can hold on.

As the sun was growing low, we drove home again, admiring a gorgeously fiery sunset and some side-lanes on our way that looked like rich allotments deeply ploughed. Here and there one caught a gleam on a shimmering, liquid-looking spot. That was a *pantano*, or mud-hole, not dangerous now,

though perhaps two feet deep; in winter it might be ten.

‘Now you have seen some of our polo and cricket, you ought also to see the favourite game which all the Argentines are wild about—the famous *pelota*,’ was said to me. *Pelota* is the Basque national game, as everyone knows who has visited Biarritz and the North of Spain. And here, though the Argentines do not care to exert themselves much, they pay well for players to come across the Atlantic, and applaud so vociferously that a few years ago, when people were richer than since the crisis, hats, sticks, coats, used to be flung down into the court, purses full of money thrown enthusiastically to encourage this player or that one, chairs and benches torn up in anger and hurled about if the popular favourites were beaten. *Pelota* (ball) is made a gambling matter, and at great matches, when the betting is unusually heavy, the players are commonly suspected of taking bribes to arrange who shall win. Everyone agreed, however, it was a splendid game, and the sight so interesting that it was a great pleasure to me when one of the guests at dinner one evening proposed to take us, for my benefit, to see a good match the following afternoon. Mrs. Pakenham and I drove, therefore, next day to the *frontone*, where our host and one of the officers of H.M.S. *Racer* met and took us upstairs to a box in the gallery, overlooking one side of the oblong court.

Below us was seated the sporting section of the spectators, who were dividing their attention between newspapers and bets. Ladies were few, for at this season they were lingering in camp, or perhaps at Mar del Plata, the Brighton of the Argentine, or at the hotel on the Tigre River, till winter cold and gaieties should fairly set in and bring them to town.

Opposite us was a long wall marked into sections, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. The narrower and very high wall at the upper end had a line painted about three feet from the ground, above which the ball must strike to count. The four players soon appeared in the court, wearing differently striped jerseys and the red or blue Basque caps that are so like Scotch Lowland 'bonnets'; whereupon some preliminary play began, as if to rouse the attention of the onlookers and the blood of the combatants. The smallest man of the four, a blue-stripe, challenged one of the reds. Each man then drew on a glove bound to his *cesta*, or weapon of play, a narrow pointed basket, in side-view like a reaping-hook, and that corresponds to a sling. Stepping out, they tossed who should begin, and blue winning, he dashed a ball on the ground, scooped it dexterously up into his *cesta*, took a short run, then danced sideways for some steps. Next moment, allowing the ball to drop, the player struck it against the wall with tremendous force, so high that it rebounded far

behind in the court, and the red, running back at utmost speed, almost missed returning it. His stroke was weaker, and the ball hit the wall half-way, whereupon blue, catching it easily, sent it this time so neatly low, only a few inches above the ground-line, that red almost dashed himself against the wall in a headlong rush to scoop it up—too late! The blue champion easily defeated both the reds, and also his fellow-blue, whereupon loud applause rang round the court, and the victor was instantly made the favourite in the betting.

Now the real match between all four players began. It was intensely exciting! Never—I can unhesitatingly declare—have I seen a game of skill to approach this, of *pelota* in breathless interest. Perhaps the reason was partly because, being so near above in the gallery, even my short vision could see the full play of muscle which flung the ball higher and higher, stronger and stronger still; the wily returns, the hot rushes, the way each man, watching the player's eye and hand, knew instinctively how high or low the latter meant to throw the ball, and was ready, as if on springs, to meet it, either in mid-air or at the rebound. Hardly a second's breathing-time did any one of the four ever snatch, what with running, dodging, watching, dancing about the ground. No wonder that the two players who guarded the court far back, and who had the severe runs to make with the sun

shining in their eyes, most often missed. Then a storm of hisses and disapproval went up from the galleries around, and the unlucky player would shrug his shoulders in comical apology, or pull off his cap to hide his face, or turn to the wall as if longing to obliterate himself from public obloquy.

At these pauses, before the other side went in to play, three of the overheated players generally called for grace, and would retire to rub their streaming faces and necks with towels. Once one of the reds, having just missed, and lost the innings, leant against the asphalt wall and slowly let himself slip till he sat on the ground, with his cap over his eyes, to express deep self-disgust. At that a roar of laughter greeted him, so stentorian that the comic actor looked up in surprise, to see fingers pointed at the wall behind. There a wet smudge, exactly the breadth of his own shoulders, was a visible joke. Despite the heat of the day, the champion blue, wiry and dapper, never turned a hair, and scornfully kept practising by himself, with wonderful flourishes of his *cesta*, till the others were called back by the timekeeper.

His play from the beginning had made the blues favourites and the betting eager in his favour, but as the score approached thirty the reds began creeping up. They had changed their tactics, and being themselves men of equal build and strength, kept the ball so furiously high that the champion

had no chance of getting in for his low and crafty play ; while his 'back,' who was a young giant, got overblown at the end of the court, where he was kept on the *qui vive*.

At last the reds scored even—then two higher ! And a sudden babel of anger, jubilation, and of betting cries burst out around us. A suet-pudding old Argentine close by, who had backed blue, jumped up, his fat body literally shaking with excitement as he screamed out accusations that the game was being sold. Then, fancying he saw a chance of hedging, he shrieked below, 'Yo doy diez pesos—yo doy—yo doy !' (I give ten dollars—I give !). But no one heeding him, he relapsed in disgusted bitterness of spirit into his seat, and, unfolding the evening paper with trembling hands, pretended that the vanity of such a miserable game had no longer the least interest in life for him. But see ! the blue champion has begun to run, having hitherto rather selfishly spared himself.

He wins two more strokes splendidly—shouts redouble—the newspaper drops on the fat man's lap. And now the reds make one, and again seem winning. The interest is breathless. One more the champion makes by a low ball, so low that challenging cries ring out, but the umpires declare in his favour. And now, now—the last !—*Blues have won !*

Amidst the tremendous applause which greeted the favourites, I noticed our Falstaff neighbour

swelling like a frog with pride and pleasure ; then suddenly the gleam faded. He was watching some individual in the crowd below, already streaming towards the exit—doubtless the man with whom he had his bet. Suspicion, anxiety, were printed plain on his fat features, till, roused to a burst of anger, he waddled in a run down the gallery steps and vanished from our ken.

‘Do you know that these Spanish fellows get as much as from six hundred to seven hundred pounds a year for their play?’ said one of our party as we were leaving. And cricketers though they were, three or four Englishmen told me they preferred playing *pelota* out here to any other game, though it truly is tremendously hard work.

Other amusements there are also of so British a nature that people enjoy them all the more, though they need description less. In warm weather one can take the train and arrive in an hour or so at the Tigre River, where smaller streams meet under the shade of tall gum-trees and weeping-willows. There is a good hotel by the water's edge, where people often spend some weeks, especially at regatta-time. Some captious critics grumble at being eaten alive by mosquitoes and sand-flies, and of unlovely smells from the ooze, but gayer spirits declare it is ‘quite like the Thames’ at Medmenham, or even Maidenhead, what with all the boats and oarsmen—although these may not be just as many.

Again, there were the famous Hurlingham pony-races that Easter week. We went out a large party by train into the country, passing new suburbs of little houses for Italian emigrants. The plain beyond was sparsely dotted with tiny *ranchitos*, their thatched eaves fringed with corn-cobs, and each owning a big oven outside and a bigger cart.

A horrid smell came down wind to my nostrils just before we whizzed past the carcass of a dead horse, torn by birds of prey. 'One is nothing,' lightly commented an encouraging friend. 'Going over the pampa next week you may pass hundreds, if there has been any cattle sickness, and there *will* be a stench.' Luckily I escaped this ordeal. Yet, as if to verify his words, five minutes later there lay a dozen and more skeletons near a slight hollow in the ground—others presently. Had there been water there, to which the poor beasts staggered thirsting, only to die of weakness?

But away with these depressing reflections on Nature's unthrift! We have reached a modest wooden station, proudly calling itself Hurlingham, and here some odd 'shandrydans' await those who do not care to walk a little way to the big gates giving entrance to the grounds of the sporting club. Here are a few small *quintas* outside the gates, built by some speculative souls who counted on the English love for a 'little box in the country.' And beyond the lodge are red-brick bachelor quarters, now full

of members who have been playing polo, or finally training their ponies last week. Some are even sleeping out in spare railway-cars on the siding. Shrubberies edge the approach; the racecourse is almost as level as a billiard-table, and if neither trees nor hills are here to form a background to the unbroken expanse, the ground is pretty, all shimmering yellow from the humble oxalis that has sprung up after the first autumn showers.

The grand-stand is filled with rows of brightly-dressed town-ladies and sunburnt *estanciero* men, come in from the camp for a fortnight's holiday. Two groups of sailors were amusing to watch: the *Racer* bluejackets, eager to see *their* First Lieutenant ride, who was got up in the most taut and trim style of silk jacket and cap; and the Germans from the *Alexandrine*, with theirs, who is a younger brother of the Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Duke August is a big young man, apparently eager for sport, and who speaks English very well. English voices fill the air; the paddock is full of jockeys in rainbow hues, and ponies—ponies everywhere. The hero who won most of the races was a Baron whose nationality I heard described as both French and Austrian; himself an *estanciero*, he was loudly cheered. Only late in the afternoon, after tea, did we return to town, praising this excellent copy of the more famous club at home. This Argentine Hurlingham is thoroughly English,

remember, although the Britishers are but a minor section in a foreign land. It is the venture of some sportsmen, who laid out the racecourse, cricket and polo grounds, and made the racquet and tennis courts to gratify the longing of all our countrymen for 'a good game' and a breath of country air.

A 'CARBONADA,' OR HASH OF VARIED
MATTER.

THE four winds of the Argentine are an example to all the blasts that ever blew in Europe.

There is first the *pampero*, blowing from the bitter South over the pampas. Then a *tormenta* is an ordinary gale, and a *tormenta de tierra* a dust-storm ; but the hot North wind is most trying of all. So greatly does it irritate human nerves that it is allowed as *an extenuating circumstance in trials for murder !* And suicides are as frequent while it blows, as in London during the November fogs. My experience of a thunderstorm at night was also rousing.

It was after eleven o'clock p.m., and I was behind my mosquito-curtain, but awake, with the light still burning and the windows slightly ajar, finding it very warm. Suddenly the tempest burst upon us without warning ! The wind roused and roared as if the mighty element were ridden by spirits in pain. It caught and lashed the palm-leaves in the sheltered

patio, and before I could spring out from under the drapery of white netting, it burst the windows wide open, though the wooden *persianos* outside remained fastened, and blew out the gas. The first thing to do was to grope for the latter and turn it off—no easy task in the intense darkness, for the jet was half-way down the wide room. Then a lightning flash revealed that I was stretching my arms vainly over the wall, a yard or so away. To close the window next needed a fierce struggle with the wind, while the rain, dashing even through the close wooden blinds, wetted my nightgown freely.

What a storm it was! In England, and even in Switzerland, where I remembered seeing a glorious one lasting all night long, I had never witnessed a spectacle to equal this for suddenness and violence. How the thunder crashed! How the lightning flashed, coursing in balls along the blackness of the sky; in sheets of flame; in zigzagging tongues! Sometimes it was crimson. Well might one think, as the Psalmist wrote, that the voice of the Lord spoke in the thunder, 'hailstones and coals of fire.'

When morning came there were many tales told of the night's wreckage, some disastrous, some facetious. Factories had been blown down, also one barrack, where several poor soldiers lay dead under the fallen mass. The roof of a house was lifted sportively off and placed on the unfinished walls of a new one—so said next morning's paper. But, it

must be added, English South American papers generally try to be funny. So great a storm had not been known for years, although formerly such were common enough, said another journal, adding, 'But the climate of a country changes as civilization proceeds, and latterly a noticeable change for the better has been perceptible in Argentina.'

We were concerned as to the fate of a guest of the preceding evening, who had gone back to his home outside Buenos Ayres by train, with the prospect of a walk to end with. Luckily, the storm broke before he left the wayside station, where he sheltered ill enough till the small hours, and then picked his way in evening dress through pitchy darkness along the railway line, the road being impassable with mud.

This same friend had interested me after dinner by an account of the birth, growth, and premature decay which he had witnessed—all in the last few years—of the brand-new city of La Plata. Famous it is, as a striking example of how men may nowadays resolve to raise a town as by magic, build it perfect in theory, but—a dead failure! Perhaps because individual wills, not general human needs, brought those stones together and reared the walls. The city's story is brief.

Every province in the land boasted its own capital, with an Alcade and a staff of officials. That of Buenos Ayres was chosen to be also the capital

of the federation, an honour to its province but a deprivation, perhaps, to certain local magnates. Hey, presto! it was proposed to build a new provincial capital, a triumph of modern art and science, and call the result La Plata.

Agreed! begun!

The site chosen is some thirty miles from Buenos Ayres, and about five from the port of Ensenada, where we landed. My informant went down by rail in those days to see 'how towns are made,' as he said. It was an interesting sight. Plough-furrows marked out the streets. Here and there stood up hoardings and zinc sheets, the shelter of the engineers who were laying out the ground. Four years later the visitor returned once more and found a city of palaces. In one of the wide streets was a bank, with a magnificent hall that might shame the Bank of England for size and the number of its safes—mostly empty. Public offices, museums, schools, all were unrivalled in South America for size and splendour. As to the electric lighting, it was then a wonder, for at night the town was almost as clear as by day.

This is how La Plata was built; but what is it now? Alas! Another failure of the Boom. The merchants' palaces are deserted, the light-towers darkened, grass is growing in the streets; it is *my triste*. When evening comes the trains are crowded with young men and old—all eager to hurry back to

busy Buenos Ayres and feel themselves in a living city again. Only the provincial employés are forced by law to reside here. Perhaps in some fifty years more this new Babel may be a heap of ruins—this city which was proudly intended to tower a pattern to all the progressing towns of the world.

The museum alone still attracts strangers to La Plata, for its collection of prehistoric animal skeletons is hardly second to that in South Kensington. Darwin believed that 'the whole area of the pampas is one wide sepulchre of extinct gigantic quadrupeds.' Here roamed the megatherium, eighteen feet high, a huge mammal allied to sloths and ant-eaters. Balancing himself on his strong tail and hind-feet, he pulled down branches, and even small trees, to feed on their leaves.* Giant armadillos, old-time horses, and elephants kept him company; and when dry seasons nowadays lower the Salado, and other rivers of these alluvial plains, huge bones are found sticking out of the *barrancas*, or riverside bluffs. It has been supposed that these monsters perished during great droughts; when seeking water in the miry river-beds, they were stuck fast, too weak to extricate themselves. So cattle died by thousands lately in the Paraná River during the *gran seco*, when unable to crawl up the treacherous banks down which they had slid, and thus herded together they died of hunger or flood.

* 'Extinct Monsters,' by Hutchinson, p. 177.

A promise must now be kept.

One morning the English man-servant announced, suppressing a smile, 'Captain —, of the Salvation Army, wishes to see you, ma'am.' And I was surprised by the entrance of a neat, modest young woman. 'Our colonel' (presumably masculine) 'has sent me in the hope that if you are writing about the Argentine you will mention our good work,' she said. 'And please will you accept a copy of our new magazine.' This was called *Hullo!* meant to signify an exclamation of kindly British greeting to exiles and outcasts. I promised to meet her wishes, if possible, after due inquiries. These latter proved most satisfactory. Mrs. Pakenham was able to assure me that many cases of apparently hopeless degradation, which the Benevolent Society found difficult to deal with, had been passed on to 'the Army,' with good results. I quite liked my captain and her dark, simple gown.

'Describe *our* hospital before all things,' urged Buenos Ayres Britishers, proud that theirs is the envy of all others here. Briefly, it is most excellent. 'Folk at home,' sore-hearted to learn that some son or brother is lying ill in this British hospital, may take heart, and feel certain that nowhere could greater care and kindness be given to the sufferer. A large building, with wide passages, commodious wards, a staff of gentle-mannered, trained English nurses, and a doctor whose cheery voice and hand-

shake of themselves infuse vigour, is the pleasing impression imprinted on my memory. Further, operating-rooms, with all or most new scientific appliances to lessen pain and hinder ill after-effects, private apartments, with comforts and prettinesses, and out-of-doors an environment of shrubs, flowers, and trim paths.

More promises. 'Tell us of the Southern Railway and the Waterworks,' friends with investments in both these had begged when I left England.

Next as to the Southern Railway Station, which fine edifice is one of the boasts of the town. We drove there that I might admire its entrance-hall, with a horseshoe marble staircase, guarded by sculptured lions. Within, the glass station roof is as large as most in Europe, while an English book-stall displayed new railway novels and papers. 'One could *almost* fancy it was home,' remarked my companion, perhaps wistfully. Plainly, Buenos Ayres is 'not a sightly town,' as an American lady once remarked of Belfast, when taken to admire its new mills for lack of older architecture. 'It is the same thing in camp,' a new-comer confided to me. 'People always drive me to *see their station!*' It is needless to discuss here the prospects of the railway itself. May it prosper as it should, being the iron road to the *estancias* of so many stout-hearted young Englishmen cattle-farming on the pampas!

And last comes a House Beautiful indeed, the Buenos Ayres Waterworks. Imagine a building occupying one whole block, or *cuadra*, of 145 square yards, its exterior, which alone cost sixty thousand pounds, glistening in the sunlight. How so? one may well ask. Because the authorities, during the Boom (once more that time of craze), recklessly voted this sum for the decoration of the Waterworks. It was decided that all the outside walls should be covered with Doulton tiles. Imagine machinery set in a rich casket. Of course the general effect is splendid—of a rich, dull red below, then cream-hued, with niches for ornaments, shields, and devices, in the Argentine blue and white colours, of rising suns, caps of Liberty, and flowers. Said a practical person to me: 'It ranks in my mind only next to the Pyramids as a monument of useless expenditure!' Peering through great wrought-iron gates, we could see the tanks within, for the splendid wooden doors stood ajar. To these tanks the water is pumped up from the filtering-beds, that are nearer the river, and themselves highly ornamental. Let us hope that the shareholders will be getting good interest for their money when these pages are printed. If not, they can unselfishly rejoice that its visible sign is a pleasant sight to the eyes for the dwellers in its somewhat poor neighbourhood.

It was the end of Lent; therefore, except for quiet dinners among the English, no gaieties were

going on which would have shown me the Argentines in society.

'You do not miss much,' so several friends consoled my supposed regret. 'Argentine hospitality is simply this: A long dinner-table spread, say, for twenty. If any of their numerous relations chance to drop in, the family are delighted. Perhaps none may come, or three, or fifteen. But strangers have little footing among them.'

Though thus reserved towards foreigners, the plump Argentinas cannot be called uncivil. On the contrary, if they happen to meet any European lady of distinction, they beg her most prettily to call, with assurances that their houses are 'at her disposal.' She accordingly rings next day, but they are all invisible. Either the señoras are indulging in siestas, or are not yet dressed for the afternoon; and they are far too easy-going to dream of calling in return. Nevertheless, should they see the lady in question driving in the park some fine evening, they smile sweetly again, coaxing her to return, for their houses are *à su disposicion*, and so on *da capo*. Theatres and dances are their chief joy, while some are said to be extremely musical.

'Laziness is their great failing,' declared an energetic English critic to me.

The bad manners of the Argentine men, on the other hand, is a theme which constantly arouses the *gringos'* ire. Not certainly from my kind hosts,

whose attention was turned to all the good points of the people with whom it was their duty and pleasure to keep up friendly relations ; but on board ship and elsewhere I heard the same indignant accusation—the tyranny of petty officials, the general discourtesy towards foreigners. A newly arrived Englishman of good official position, whom I know, was introduced to a Minister with whom he would be presently obliged to transact business. The latter turned his back upon him, remarking with a sneer, ‘The señor does not speak Castilian.’ This was then true, yet the señor was excellently well acquainted with French, German, and Italian. Good manners are so native to men of Spanish blood that one is surprised to notice this possible outcome of jealousy at the foreign influx and their growing influence in the land. And I was more struck later by this, when seeing the warm terms of respect and friendship existing in Chili between the English and Chilians; while Peruvians are proverbial for their good breeding, derived doubtless from their ancestors of blue blood who settled in Lima, the capital of the Spanish Viceregal Court.

Lent was ending, as I have said, and Good Friday dawned warmly in a blessed hush and silence through the erst noisy streets of Buenos Ayres. No tram-horns tooted their warning like the combined cry of Punch and a bagpipe’s first squeak ; no carts creaked, nor carriages rattled over the big stones. Such sounds were forbidden ; even the church-bells were

mute. But black-dressed crowds, mostly of women, were hurrying silently from church to church, so as to visit seven that morning in honour of the stations of the Cross. One visitor later told us of a little maid who, having small time at disposal, went seven times in and out of her own church, visiting the stations in turn, and praying 'as fast as possible,' so she naïvely related to her mistress.

On Saturday at noon out burst a resounding din of pealing church-bells from every spire ; of carriage-wheels ; horns ; stir and life. It was like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty all waking up. Crackers went off at every corner, where street urchins were '*exploding Judas*.' Some juvenile crowds carried the latter in effigy.

'Ah ! but it is not so fine a contrast as in Mexico,' said my kind host, recalling his own days as attaché. 'There, so soon as the ban of silence is removed, at mid-day, the empty streets fill with noises and rejoicings, carriages and vehicles, with miraculous suddenness ; all the horses are fresh groomed, and even the costers' donkeys wear gilded shoes !'

The prettiest sight in or near Buenos Ayres is that of Palermo Park, outside the town. It is really a Bois de Boulogne, with its fine *avenidas*, woods, and gleams of willow-fringed water. One day we went thither to enjoy an open-air tea-party, consisting only of our gentler sex, old and young. We rambled to the flat, sedgy banks of the great brown river La

Plata, and down wooded rides where singing and the twanging of guitars occasionally told that Italian or Basque poor families were enjoying an *al-fresco* afternoon, like richer ones, picturesquely grouped on fallen trees. This sounds a pastoral scene, yet it is not safe for Englishwomen to take solitary rambles here. The ladies of the land never go out unattended, for the 'rough' class that drifts to this sea-board town from Europe would be disrespectful, if not dangerous.

Strange stories these clumps of flowering aloes and bosky walks could tell, one thought, wandering under the murmuring shade of the she-oaks, for Palermo was once the favourite country home of Rosas the Dictator, whose bloody deeds and tyranny at last roused the Argentines to revolt. They fought, conquered, obliged him to fly, and his confiscated property was seized by the nation.

Two of my companions, Englishwomen, but born and reared here, told me interesting tales of that time. Rosas, they said, was very handsome, a brilliantly blue-eyed man of English type. Although of good family, he preferred the company of *gauchos* from his boyhood, and, when in power, loved to lower the pride of his own aristocratic class. A gang of desperate characters surrounded him, ready to wreak his vengeance on all opponents ; but my informants added that he perhaps did not know all their evil deeds done in his name.

Manuelita, his daughter, a sweet, graceful creature, alone could influence him to mercy, and if this lady be alive, it should please her to know that her memory is still cherished in many hearts. The tyrant himself, when overthrown, fled to Southampton, where he lived in comfort and died in peace ; but she, Doña Manuela, has always remained exiled. And what seems still more hard is, that her betrothed husband, who had the manhood to follow and marry her, lost alike home and fortune for so doing.

Rosas chose red as his, the federal colour, and ordered men to wear red waistcoats, and women red bows in their hair out-of-doors, as a sign of loyalty. One lady told me of how some neighbouring girls of good family once rushed to her mother's house for safety, making their way over the flat roofs. Some friend had warned them to hide because they had been noticed walking in the street without the tyrant's badge, and Rosas' men were tracking them. The girls escaped, but their poor old mother, who bravely stayed at home, was cruelly beaten by the ruffians.

'Rosas was a despot, but at least he was honest,' so the narrator summed up the Dictator's character. 'We have had so many tyrants who have not been honest.'

'Come and see my house,' said this friend. 'It is a real old native one, unlike the newer ones of European style.' Which offer I accepted for the next day.

Stories of the bloodshed and terror of those times lead one to speak of the lawlessness which still exists in the Argentine. One morning during my stay, when a murder, almost as usual, had taken place in the night—the assassin, of course, escaping—the following comment was made by an English newspaper: 'It is no extraordinary affair for the police to find almost in view of their own station some hacked and mangled corpse, whose blood-stained garments and bleeding body bear witness to the ferocity of its murderers. Most truly may it be said of Buenos Ayres that even the very stones cry aloud for vengeance on the cowardly assassins who make life in many parts of it a daily menace and nightly danger.'

Again and again residents repeat, 'There is no such thing as law here.' The poor Italians who save up money and hide it in their huts are constantly attacked by the *gauchos* for their hoard. Some years ago three *gauchos* massacred an entire family of women and children. The colonists, in fury, rose and shot the murderers by lynch law. Ten of these colonists were thereupon promptly seized and put in prison by the authorities for a long period. But murderers themselves are released after two or three years, and then enrolled in the army. There is no capital punishment.

An instance is quoted of an Italian who murdered his wife, and ingenuously explained to the judge

that he had brought her out from Italy in order to do so, having heard at home of the Argentine mildness of punishment. His candid confidence was rewarded by a light sentence.

'If there should be a row in the street here, as might easily happen this minute,' said an English gentleman to me as we sat on the low seat of the open drawing-room window, protected from the side-path only by the usual tall grating, 'and if a man were knifed, I should not dream of going out to help him. Even if I happened to be outside, I am afraid I should walk away in the opposite direction. It is actually illegal as well as dangerous to assist a dying or wounded person. The law assumes the nearest passer-by to be the assassin.' So the victim lies bleeding till the police come in their baggy blue uniforms, shakoes, and white spats, bringing their own doctor—when the latter can be found.

People who have a fancy for being their own architects may like a description of my friend's old-fashioned Argentine home. Its front stood on the street, painted dark brown, with an entrance-hall and drawing-room in front. Beyond these came an oblong space of courts open to the sky, and dwelling-rooms so curiously disposed that a diagram will be the easiest explanation. On one side three small *patios* were shaded by billowy canvas awnings. The said courts were paved in black and white, *patio* the first being filled with flowers and plants ;

while in the centre of the second stood a delightful stone well, with wrought-iron open work overhead

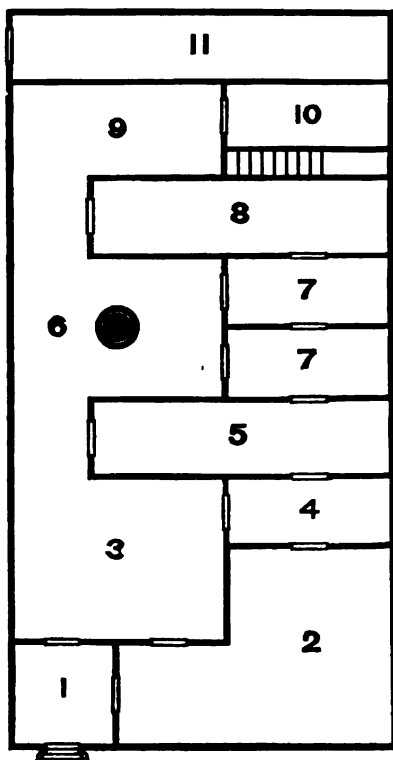


DIAGRAM OF AN OLD-FASHIONED CREOLE HOUSE IN
BUENOS AYRES.

1, Entrance-hall ; 2, drawing-room ; 3, first *patio*, surrounded with flower-pots and palms ; 4, small room—study or bedroom ; 5, best bedroom ; 6, second *patio*, well in centre ; 7, 7, small rooms ; 8, dining-room ; 9, servants' *patio* ; 10, kitchen ; 11, open space with orange-trees, poultry, etc. Upstairs, *alto* bedrooms cover part of the roof ; but the *asotea* looking on the street is one-storied, and here the family gather to sit of an evening.
(N.B.—This, being roughly sketched from memory, is probably defective in scale, and possibly wanting in the number of smaller rooms.)

wreathed in curves. Vague memories of Pompeii were roused by these summer parlours, not unlike

the tessellated and curtained courts where Roman damsels and dames of old reclined at noontide.

The *patios* were partly divided by projecting rooms—what one has heard Yankees term *jogs*. The first was the best bedroom; the next the dining-room; these were connected by smaller bed and sitting-rooms opening out of each other like a rabbit-warren.

‘Yes, it is nice in the summer to enjoy the open air, but in winter it is very unfortunate that there is no room for a covered veranda here,’ pathetically remarked the lady of the house.

Whereupon there rose in my mind the graphic description of a dinner-party recently given in just such a Creole house. It rained as it *does rain* out here! What matter? Umbrellas were simply produced by the servant. And away each dinner-couple started under one, pattering through two streaming *patios* and arriving with a hop, skip, and a jump into the dining-room. Dinner ended, the guests all returned through the bedrooms in procession, for the children by this time were put to bed, and sleeping soundly.

The dining-room of my friendly acquaintance was so dark that one could hardly distinguish a fine show of old silver goblets and dishes piled on the sideboard. There were no windows, and little light filtered through the heavily blinded glass doors; the gloom surprised me, not knowing yet how in all

South America the sun is excluded when possible. As to the furniture of the house, this was of the old-fashioned French style, relieved by some modern English touches, especially in some pretty bedrooms upstairs, looking out on the *azotea*. When rain falls, after this flat roof has been thereby washed clean, the water is then diverted from the gutter-pipes into another one leading into the well in the courtyard below ; here the hostess showed me with pride how carefully it is twice strained on its way. Of course, the aforementioned *alto* (upper) bedrooms are somewhat of an innovation.

Lastly, English cooks would envy this and many such another Argentine kitchen opening into the third *patio*, airy, bright, and gleaming with white-tiled walls and well-scoured copper.

And here one may mention the great difficulty of getting servants in the Argentine, and their high wages when found. Thirty pounds to even forty pounds is the price of an ordinary cook in the home, say, of a banker's clerk ; and she hardly knows her business, having, most likely, been a laundress or nursemaid in her last situation. All seek variety of occupation. One lady told me, laughing, that she had lately advertised for a kitchenmaid, whereupon came an applicant in the shape of a man ! When her Irish cook inquired into the last trade of this brawny help, he naïvely owned he was a blacksmith.

Young Englishwomen coming out here will do well to remember that they may be obliged to turn their hands to much household work that was always done for them at home. Even the poorer kind of Irish girls are sought after for servants, and they look down with amusing contempt upon 'them Italians.' French and Basques are excellent in service, but are hard to persuade into accepting housework.

Alas for fleeting time! It only seemed four or five days when I found that as many weeks had elapsed of a delightful visit which must soon be brought to a close, before the snows of May, falling in the high mountain region, should prevent me from crossing the Andes.

'Why should you hurry away? Stay a month or two longer with us, and come up to Paraguay,' urged Mrs. Pakenham hospitably, her husband being accredited to that Republic as well as to the Argentine. All their accounts of Paraguay certainly sounded most interesting. Lovely views on the long river journey; gentle Indian women dressed in white; red earth banks bordering the lanes; deep woods; tiled roofs of divers shapes. These Indians are the only natives in all South America who have a love for art, and they are also the most courteous, so Mr. F——, one of the Secretaries to the Legation, told me. He praised them warmly, while admitting that 'there was not much of their dress or houses to speak of—

indeed, little to vanishing-point ;' for dwelling, four poles and a tile roof ; for dress, one cotton garment, but that snowy.

However, staying to see Paraguay would necessitate continuing my journey to Chili by the Straits, the only sea-trip of which I have a nervous dread, from having had several friends either lost or shipwrecked there ; also giving up crossing the Cordilleras, and the inland scenery my mind was bent far more on seeing. For salt water and ice glaciers are, after all, pretty much alike all the world over.

Before leaving the Republic, a few words should be said upon the Jewish colony here, and Baron Hirsch's scheme for rescuing his distressed country-people in Europe from misery and oppression, to bring them to this good land of milk and honey, where they may found a new Judæa.

I regretted being unable to visit the colony, but made inquiries about it from some who had been employed in the scheme, and who warmly praised its administration by Colonel Goldsmidt. This well-known English officer gave up temporarily his chances of a fine career at home to help enthusiastically in the task of regenerating his unhappy, mostly Russian, co-religionists. On his arrival, it was found that many Russian-Jewish families of the lowest class had been sent out in a spirit of mistaken generosity. These were squatting in zinc tents on the plain round the Administration House, amply supplied with the

necessaries of life, but indulging in idleness. It was necessary to return nearly one thousand such loafers to the committee at Hamburg, as incapable or unwilling to undertake agricultural work—here the chief field of labour. About two thousand Jews remain, and their number will probably be increased by fresh European drafts.

Under the efficient rule of Colonel Goldsmidt, lands were soon measured out to the colonists and work well begun. He has now returned to England; but if, as is the opinion of some onlookers, the direction of the Jewish affairs here has not been too frequently changed, it will be interesting to watch the future of this perhaps unique paternal scheme.

Curious, nevertheless, and illustrating Argentine life and thought, is the fact that many others to whom I spoke took not the faintest interest in the matter. One never heard the Jewish project discussed.

‘Why is this?’ was my surprised inquiry.

‘Because,’ replied an *estanciero*, who loved the topics of wheat and cattle-farming, or of polo-playing in camp—‘because, above all, the Argentine is a land where everyone is *busy trying to make money* as fast as possible. The Jews! that is Baron Hirsch’s affair. Here every other man has his scheme, his dream, and is too anxious about his own irons in the fire to think it worth while to talk of his neighbour’s business, except in some rare idle moments. *We have no leisured class!*’

So there came an evening when, after early dinner, I regretfully said good-bye to my kind hostess and friend of olden days in Ulster, who is so deservedly popular here that she is said not to have a single enemy. Mr. Pakenham 'sped his parting guest' by escorting me at nine o'clock to what is called the Pacific train, which leaves three nights of the week on a thirty-six hours' run, especially conveying travellers bound on crossing the Andes. In this, by the care of a friendly director, I was given a four-berthed sleeping compartment to myself.

As with many good-byes and *hasta la vista's* (in French *au revoir*) we steamed away into the darkness of the plain, first one Italian attendant, and then another, who also spoke German, came to inquire solicitously after my wants. They had orders, it appeared, to look after me especially well, which they carefully carried out.

Soon I was asleep, as comfortable as could be, bound for Mendoza town, six hundred and fifty-four miles inland, at the foot of the Andes. All night our train was speeding over the vast grassy plain—the Gran Pampa; and in one's drowsy ears clicked the old friendly wheel-tune, 'racketty-rick! ricketty-rack! of many a night journey in Europe.

CROSSING THE CORDILLERAS.

I AWOKE, surprised at finding myself sleeping in a Pullman car instead of on shipboard. It was sunrise, and the horizon was ringed with a brilliant band of red melting upwards into gold. All around was a vast circle, which was nothing but grass—grass—tussocks of grass. How different from the blue sea-ring, hardly flecked with foam, to which my eyes had grown lately accustomed !

So this was the Great Pampa, a gigantic meadow of some hundreds of miles, 'miles of nothingness,' as it had been described to me. After all, if monotonous, there is a grandeur, a solemnity, in seeing the sun rise from the east out of the grassy plain, and sink down into it again on the west. No high hills, no trees to obscure one's view of the great luminary ; it should make one a sun-worshipper. Nevertheless—to sleep once more.

At eight o'clock came a lonely shanty of a station and cups of coffee. Men passengers got off the cars, and hurried to drink and wash at the primitive

draw-well. (They did so at other stations all that day.)

Till noon—nothing, as regards scenery, but grass to be seen; then one low bunker of sand, as if meant for golfing. More nothingness. But now and again one perceived wild-looking cattle in the distance. Horses there were in plenty. I counted one herd of about two hundred mares and colts, a small one; there must have been thousands on the pampa.

Terrible indeed must be the sight of a prairie fire: miles of flame sweeping along the horizon; poor beasts, in maddened herds, flying terror-stricken in a too often vain hope of escape.

After a fair lunch on board the train, I returned along the corridor to my compartment and grew drowsy. Rousing in the late afternoon, behold there were bushes dotting the plain like thorns sometimes thus scattered in an English meadow, two or three to the mile. And, hurrah! here come clumps of willows and tufts of pampa-grass—quite a feature. One *chacra*, or small farm, with a big haystack, next appeared—a lodge in the wilderness.

Passing some fine woods, our train once more bore us into the wide pampa. There was a blue hill far away; it seemed just like sighting land from a ship at sea. How far can one see around here. I wondered, if lost on the plain? Not so far as from the height of a ship's deck. As the sun sank, there

was a lovely view ahead of dark violet hills against an orange and crimson western glow. Below, the pampa, dark-specked with grazing cattle, spread golden in the level beams.

Quickly the dusk falls; and in starless darkness we speed on towards the Andes through the night. A fair dinner at San Luis for two dollars (or two shillings at present rate) breaks my solitude. Then sleep follows, and dust—dust for hours sifting through the windows so thickly that in a few more hours one would need to be dug out. It lay inch-deep, and gray everywhere save under my head on the pillow.

‘Señora, it is five o’clock. Here is Mendoza.’ The attendant was knocking at my door.

Ugh, ugh! There was only time to get fully equipped, wash one’s face, and shake off the dust before we stopped. Then an English voice was heard asking for me in the darkness, and there followed a hearty English hand-shake and welcome.

Before leaving Buenos Ayres, an invitation had arrived for me to spend a few days at Mendoza, and rest before the fatigue of crossing the mountains.

My new host and his wife were friends of the Pakenhams, and he held an official situation on the railway here. So do most of the very few Englishmen who inhabit this pretty town nestling under the shadow of the giant Andes. A delightful place, in my opinion, and that of some other passing travellers; but primitive, also distinctly solitary for those with

roving British blood in their veins whom fate imprisons here for some years.

How deliciously fresh the air was, as, after some invigorating, hot coffee in the station, we walked across a *plaza* of young green trees! The stars were dying out pale, deep violet hills encircled the sleeping town, and a lovely, faint orange glow gave token of the dawn. My host's house lay quite near, and right glad I was, entering the little *patio*, to find an open window-door awaiting me, and a real bed.

After two hours' sleep, I appeared through the window, or door—for in these native houses there is no other light—to find my pretty hostess and an English breakfast awaiting me in the small veranda of the courtyard.

Breakfast over, we three sallied forth on a ramble 'down town.' The old Mendoza was destroyed by the terrible earthquake of 1861, and this one, a little removed, is new. Here are wide streets, so wide that in another earthquake shock one could rush out with safety; shady *plazas*; *avenidas*; fountains.

Trees line most of the streets; green vistas greet the eyes everywhere. And a noise of running water fills one's ears in the Alameda, for down most of the principal streets flows a rapid mountain stream, diverted hither from a great irrigating canal of the neighbourhood made by the Inca Guaymallen of old. So wide and deep are these lesser water-

channels, called *acequias*, that many a child has been drowned in them; therefore, most are loosely boarded over. At one corner we came full on a crowd surrounding a cart and a struggling horse. His hind-legs and part of his body had crashed through some of these rotten planks. He was hauled out in triumph, yet I wonder and doubt if the hole he left there is mended yet.

This water is used for washing, and even drinking purposes, in the town, and strict penalties are enforced if it is wilfully fouled. Little bridges over it at intervals connect the side-path with the roadway, and green garden-seats lining these form both a parapet and convenient gossip-lounges for householders in the cool of the evening.

These three things are my chief impressions of Mendoza: foliage, running water, and seats on the *acequia* bridges.

The principal incident in Mendoza's history is its great earthquake. In March, 1861, 'the geologist Bravard wrote that Mendoza would certainly be destroyed by an earthquake in less than forty years. Ten days later he perished with 12,000 of the inhabitants.*' It happened on a Sunday, or feast-day, I believe; for most of the population were in church, when the earth literally yawned and engulfed them, as it did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

An English doctor, riding into the country that

* 'Handbook of the River Plate.'

morning to visit a patient, found his home vanished on his return, and the town a mass of shapeless mud ruins veiled in dust. His wife and children were all at mass when the catastrophe happened. Only the nurse and baby, who had been straying in the garden, survived. This latter I met, now a grown man, and speaking only Spanish, though English by name and origin. Forty of his relations, he told me, perished on that fatal day.

But its chief horror lay in that a number of the victims were entombed alive, and the *gauchos*, flocking from the country around in hope of plunder, joined in the work of digging them out, but are accused of despatching many for the sake of their ornaments.

‘There was one nun I knew,’ said an Irish friend of mine, ‘who was saved by a pair of scissors. “How so?” do you say? Well, the Mother Superior sent her out into the garden with a pair of scissors to cut roses, and there she felt the earth shaking under her, and heard it cracking. When she came to her senses, there was no convent nor chapel, nor one of the whole Sisterhood left, barring herself. So, you see, the scissors saved her.’ We did not quite see; but let that pass.

‘I can tell you of a stranger case than that,’ broke in another friend. ‘There was a little girl here who was dug out of the earthquake ruins alive beside her dead mother. She was sent over to

Chili to some relations, and there, only a little later, was in the great church in Santiago that took fire when some 2,000 women were in it on a feast-day, and all but a few were burnt alive, owing to the throng getting jammed in the doorways. This child, being small, was lifted up to a narrow window and pulled through the grating. So she escaped. You will hardly believe it, but on her wedding-tour—for she has grown to womanhood now—she and her husband were shipwrecked somewhere on the west coast, and were either cast on a desert island or drifted in an open boat for days till found, I forget which.'

Now, was this good luck to escape, or an ill fate to be three times in such great peril of life? The question was argued on both sides.

I stayed for six days in Mendoza, enjoying greatly some glimpses of its simplicity of life and its daily sights and scenes—a piquant change of pabulum to a homely British palate. Take one morning, for instance, when I sat in the little drawing-room (for it was a small house) with the window open on the street. Up rode a *gaucho*, dressed in white, if I remember rightly—no worse than his fellows, at any rate. He bestrode a nag, sorry enough, yet still capable, and wore a medal round his neck. Off came his hat in a bow of much grace, but he stretched out his hand towards the window-grating, imploring alms.

‘It’s all right, he’s one of *our* beggars ; the town has so many licensed ones who are allowed to come round,’ said my hostess, looking out over my shoulder.

So, instead of dismissing him with a ‘Pardon,



A GAUCHO.

little brother, for not giving you anything,’ some small coins were placed in his palm.

‘Dios lo pagara’ (‘God will repay it’), was the dignified response, uttered as if returning a cheque with interest that would be placed to one’s credit in the accounts of Providence. Now, where would

be self-denial or real charity, if a giver meanly expected every sixpence to be thus repaid?

Failing to see he had paid a poor compliment to Western minds, and with a farewell bow of perfect politeness, this beggar on horseback rode on.

It surprised me at first that a mendicant could afford a steed. But, as my friend and reflection both pointed out, how easy it is to buy an old horse for a few shillings in this country, and graze him for nothing in the outskirts of the town! Further, if it is not difficult to buy the horse, it is still more easy to steal him. Also, it is barbarous to expect any poor man to walk when he can ride. Another usual sight is, perhaps, some old woman with the very biggest of goitres. Even dogs here, and also fowls, it is said, get goitres from drinking the water, in which there is much lime.

A third incident amused me much one morning, when we happened to enter a fashionable confectioner's shop. It was only mid-day, but by the counter lounged three officers in blue uniforms and gold lace, swords grasped in their left hands, all busy enjoying sweets. They and two civilian friends were nudging each other in the ribs, laughing like school-boys over a good 'tuck-in.' At last the martial band clattered out, sabre in one hand and a parcel apiece of jammy cakes in the other.

Of course we made a due pilgrimage to the ruins of the old churches, solitary surviving witnesses of



A RANCHO.

the earthquake. These look more imposing in photographs than in reality, being only of adobé, or mud brick, fast crumbling away. What thousands of bodies still lie entombed under the dust almost knee-deep around those low walls and in the brown *plaza* ! It is a huge catacomb.

It was far more pleasant to drive into the country by the Zanjon river, past thickets of tall tasselled sugar-canes, willow fringes, and picturesque *ranchos*. Some of these were extraordinary, mere bamboo booths without roofs ; others owned mud walls, and were covered with branches. At first I took them to be miserable shelters for cattle.

The Zanjon had resolved itself into five or six streams, bordered by weeping willows, and wandering through a broad tract of gravel. Its effect was green and poetic. We were driving in a street victoria, my hostess and I, accompanied by a nurse, baby, small boy, and two dogs. Returning home by a different road, it was necessary to ford the water.

Hé ! Hé ! Our lively but ill-tempered black nags jolted down into the first stream, crossed it, and mounted the opposite bank. *Holá ! Holá !* Through stream the second in safety. Our ancient driver now shouted himself hoarse in encouragement — *Ea ! Sus ! Animo !* while cracking his whip deafeningly. Down we went the third time. And then the ponies and front wheels indeed rushed up the

gravelly side, but no farther. One horse suddenly jibbed, sulked; the carriage stayed in the water.

Reproaches and whip-slashes mingled in a storm. '*Ojalá!*' (from 'O, Allah!' most euphonious of interjections)—all was useless; and ladies, babies, and dogs were obliged to land on the adjacent bank of a shingle island.

Another street victoria was luckily passing, and crashed to the rescue through bushes, water, and gravel. Hey presto! our wicked black gees turned and rushed back into the river, where they began calmly drinking to their own success. As we drove away later with the relief party, their disgraced master was still filling the air with useless wrath and woe.

And now the crossing of the mountains, the crux of my long journey, was discussed.

'Is it not very courageous of you to think of going over alone?' said many of my friends.

'The question is not one of courage, but necessity. It is so late in the year that only the last swallows are left. Some travellers must be crossing this week.'

It turned out that eleven were so doing, myself the only lady. There is a firm here, called that of Villalonga, which undertakes the personal charge of travellers and likewise forwards parcels.

'Go by it,' urged my friends. 'We shall feel so much happier about your safety,' (Like Tony Lumpkin, I agreed in order to feel happier myself.)

Señor Villalonga came to call upon me in amusing tribulation one afternoon.

‘What shall I do?’ he asked in Spanish. ‘My head will be cut off, it appears from letters I got, if you are not taken great care of! Shall I send an English clerk with you all the way? He belongs to your Young Men’s Christian Association.’

Was he used to riding mules by precipices?

This seemed doubtful.

As we all laughed, the English ‘administrador and chief engineer of the Transandine Railway, who was also calling upon me, banished all our small fears by offering to take charge of me himself for at least the first day. He was going up with two younger engineers to examine the line, and the mouth of the tunnel already begun, which is some day to pierce the summit of the Andes and form a subway between the Argentine and Chili.

So good an offer was not to be refused. Mr. D. not only holds the chief post on the mountain line, but crossed the Andes on foot in the snow some years ago with two companions—if ‘on foot’ is a proper expression, when much of the journey apparently consisted of sliding down the snow-covered mountain-sides seated on a fringe of sheep’s tails carefully tied on for that purpose.

So before seven one morning my most genial host and I were breakfasting at the station. The still twilight sky overhead was a sight not to be forgotten.

Great splashes of indigo clouds shaded to brighter edges of blue; for the sun was later rising than ourselves.

The Transandine train, with its tiny long cars, reversible seats, and mirrors in every panel, is a gem of its kind. Away we went at half-past seven, past suburbs of bamboo hovels, maize patches, and sugar-cane, ascending the low foot-hills.

The railroad follows the course of the Mendoza River, up a valley often narrowing to precipitous gorges, with bridges flung across the roaring torrent below. The rocks above seemed to close in overhead. Now the river would be foaming far beneath on the right; a few minutes later on the left. Out again into a barren valley, mottled with a few sad-coloured bushes, the only verdure to be seen. One of my companions told me these plants have large roots useful for firing; while the leaf is a good remedy for horses' sore backs.

My other two friends were riding on the engine, wrapped in heavy *ponchos*, and doubtless keenly scrutinizing the line. I might have had the glory of a seat above the cow-catcher; pleasant here, I was assured, where cattle are few, though often gory on the great pampas. But, knowing to-morrow would bring some hardships of travelling, this lazy chronicler preferred luxury inside the cars whilst it might still be enjoyed.

Two hours later we passed one green oasis—a

small *estancia*, with a row of poplars and rich *alfalfa*. After that the region grew wilder, grander, and utterly barren. Forget all your impressions of Swiss pine-woods, sharp peaks, and deep, richly green valleys. Here the eye wanders over great red spaces of rocky mountains rising into the sky, buttressed by lower cliffs and foot-hills, all as if fired once in some great furnace. It is a weirdly fine colouring, this hot volcanic glow.

‘But how it fatigues the eye,’ said one young engineer. ‘After travelling up and down here for two years, one’s sight aches for a green leaf.’

No coffee was procurable at the wooden station huts, but presently our chief left his engine and gave four of us a breakfast in his private *coche*, produced from provision-cases meant to last the trio for the next few days. Our full claret-glasses were placed on the floor for want of a table, and so smooth was the motion, the line being admirably laid, that not a drop was spilt. Compare this with the rough old journey by the mule-track along these gorges. Yet Mendoza was always more Chilian than Argentine in its ways, close intercourse having been kept up with its neighbours on ‘the other side.’ The difficult Uspallata Pass was easier to traverse than the 600 miles of grassy sea which stretches to Buenos Ayres.

Interesting stories are told of the difficulties and dangers of making the railroad. Hardly a wretched

posada up these valleys. Higher still in the mountains, only *casuchas*, or shelters for the postmen who have long dared the passage across the mountains, even in midwinter.

Not pleasant to be storm-bound, like our chief, in one of these for some days—half frozen with snow coming through a hole in the roof; stifled with smoke from a fire in the middle; no chimney, no window, and but little food. Travellers used to journey with some half-dozen dogs apiece, which at night, lying near, would keep vital warmth in their owners. These were 'good old times,' hearing of which made me the more thoroughly enjoy present-day comforts, hoping even brighter things for the Transandine in future.

The excessive good care taken of me here, and, as I may gratefully now remark, everywhere else during a ten months' tour, soon necessitated lunch at a larger station. This was likewise a rude building in the barren cliff-bound valley. Yet memory vaguely recalls white Italian soup, hot cutlets, a good omelette, and country wine with coffee to follow. One may fare worse, even in England, on cross-country lines.

On again, ever imperceptibly ascending; more barrenness but for the few sage-like bushes, looking as if some gardener had dibbled them in at regular intervals; then a wider valley, the river-bed strewn with large boulders.

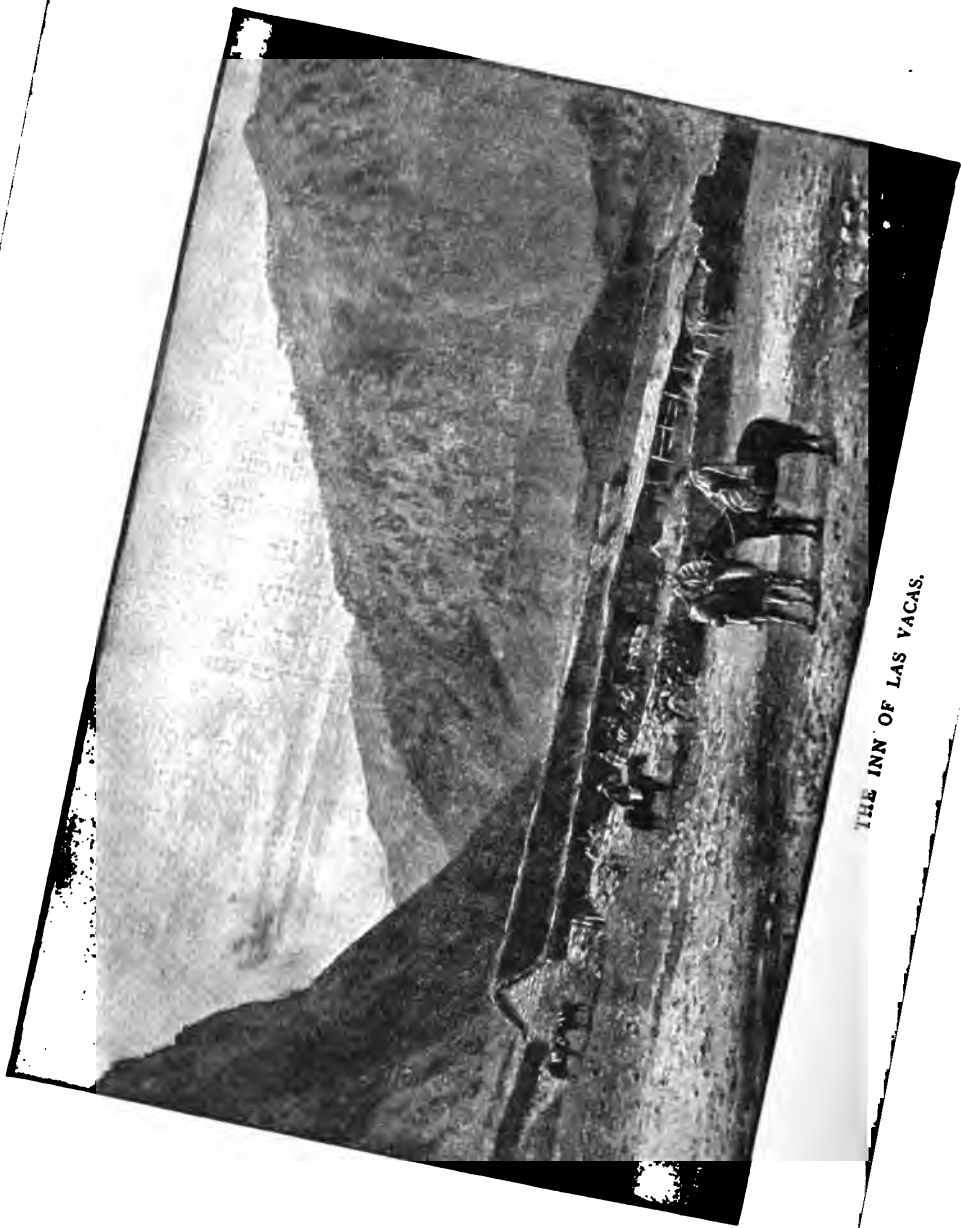
We stopped, for the railway was as yet made no farther.

It was about three o'clock, and a group of mules awaited us in the shade of some cottages. I was promptly hoisted on a small black mule by an Italian guide, who now took possession of me as his lawful property. This was Villalonga's head-muleteer, or *capataz*, who announced that, as I was the only lady of the *tropilla*, it was his duty not to leave my side, and that, by his master's orders, the best beast was given me. With grateful glee I started, the engineers trudging off up the line on business, but promising to rejoin me in the inn by dinner-time.

'Leave your mule alone, señora; it knows the way,' said my guide. And this trusty animal immediately tried to walk with me over the edge of a bluff, to the discomfort of my nerves and the indignation of its master.

With the *capataz* riding by my side, a young *arriero* behind, entrusted with my rugs, dressing-bag, and umbrellas, the luggage following on pack-mules, away went our cavalcade, swelled by the other ten passengers. We scrambled down a steep bank, and trotted along a stony road through a dry and barren scene.

A cloud of dust soon appeared in front, shrieks and shouts were heard, and some apparent madmen thundered towards us at a gallop, wildly waving arms and spurring steeds. Only quiet *arrieros* bound on



THE INN OF LAS VACAS.

some simple errand or other. Next came some biting and kicking mules which disputed our right to pass. Then a loud shout from behind ; a four-horsed *coche* tore past us, bound for an inn beyond that of Las Vacas, swaying and rolling so perilously round sharp corners, by narrow parts of the road overhanging the river, and through fords, that I was thankful this was not the public one which runs in full season, and which was stopped at the approach of winter, or I might have booked a place in it.

Soon in a valley of desolation I saw some pools and a few *corrals* of dry stones, beyond which lay a square of zinc-roofed low buildings.

‘Are these the inn stables?’ I asked, expecting to see some dwelling perched under the edge of the volcanic cliffs, where not a blade or a sprout of green grows.

‘Señora, this is the *hotel* of Las Vacas.’

A troop of pack-mules were being unloaded. Baggage, saddles, and sheepskins lay in piles on the stony, dusty ground. Rough men in *ponchos* were blindfolding the sulky mules with sacks to keep them from biting or straying, the beasts looking as if affected by toothache. Gaunt dogs prowled around, and an important individual hurried to dismount me, exclaiming in protecting tones: ‘Vous aurez une bonne petite chambre à vous seule.’

To this day I am not clear what were his particular privileges concerning my welfare ; but I had

begun to feel like a registered parcel, marked 'Fragile' and handed from one to another with care. Which agreeable feeling of faith lasted, and, indeed, grew by justification, during all my journey till home again. He led me through the inner yard, littered with hen-coops, rabbits, bones, and *peones*, to a kind of cowshed door. Here, unfastening a thong hitched to a rusty nail, he displayed with pride—my room! A mud floor, four-paned window (one pane of wire sieve), three camp-beds, two morsels of matting, no chair, and a tin washbasin! And how lucky to enjoy these comforts alone, and not with strange señoras, as when crowded.

Neither bolt, key, nor door-handle was discernible. But my *capataz* was never distant in any dilemma. In a trice he ran off, then reappeared bearing a rough plank, which he planted in a deep hollow of the floor, leaning the other end against the door.

'Miré! do this, and a regiment of Indians could not rob you, señorita. Besides, for safety, I shall sleep just outside.'

There were truckle beds scattered out of doors under the roof-eaves for guides and *peones*, and, true enough, at my threshold the good fellow snored through the night.

Lurking distrust in the safety of my luggage without personal inspection being a weakness of mine, I now ventured outside, 'going delicately.

The innkeeper was a Scotchman, who cordially accompanied me in search of my treasured gear among the other luggage heaps flung down in the dusty *corral*.

My dress-trunks, it may here be noted, were all small enough to balance each other on pack-mules when crossing the mountains.

Oh, my best hats! their light box was cruelly rope-marked and half buried under dead weight.

'Hombre!' the Scotchman cannily pointed out to the ubiquitous *capataz*. 'See, there are the señorita's *sombreros de Domingo* (Sunday-go-to-meeting bonnets). Behold!' And the *capataz* shouted indignantly to an underling of an *arriero* with a resounding 'Car-amba!'

Now this, I always formerly believed to be a Spanish oath; but several Chilian ladies have assured me sacredly it means no worse than 'Oh dear!' or the Irish 'Bother!' and that they constantly use it. What a safety-valve for a poor housewife to have such a delightful expletive with a rolling *r* to burst out with 'when the china is broken'!

'Hombre!' (Man!) is the correct way of addressing any masculine being—friend or chimney-sweep—in amusement, surprise, reproach, or otherwise. I used it as a preface to my Spanish sentences whenever possible, just to give myself a careless air of fine acquaintance with the language.

Out of doors was so uninviting, I returned to sit on my bed and lay out my travelling wear for to-

morrow; the one day of probable discomfort, and certainly of a long mule-ride for the best part of some eleven hours, which various friends' accounts made me anticipate like a willing martyr with somewhat 'fearful' joy. Nether riding garments, a serge skirt and warm jacket—for the cold would be bitter on the mountains before sunrise and towards evening—was the sage counsel given me, which was gratefully followed.

'And at Mendoza buy one of the enormous straw hats sold there to wear going over the mountains. They are tied down with white tape to keep the sharp air and sun from one's ears and neck. Everyone gets them.'

I did so too, but modified the rigour of the law by black satin ribbons tying over my hat gipsy-wise. Also a gauze veil, long enough to cross behind and swathe round the neck—a Buenos Ayres purchase which nearly reduced me to bankruptcy, costing about five shillings. The effect of that hat was prodigious. In size, if placed on a pole, it would almost shelter four at a tea and tennis party.

'*Above all things, do not wash your face for three days!*' was the crowning sentence of warning. 'Oh, of course, if you like your skin to peel off, *do!* Otherwise you must use vaseline or cold cream.'

This simple toilet made, dinner followed in a whitewashed room. My three English friends and myself occupied chairs of honour at the head of the

table ; the other eight or ten travellers came next ; while the guides and some very indifferent company were seated lower down on benches.

The meal had several courses ; some terribly tough, to the sorrow, rather than anger, of a French neighbour. In the bustle of departure this morning, a kind somebody had vaguely presented him and some other fellow-passengers, urging hurriedly upon them the high responsibility of taking care of me on the morrow.

‘If madame will allow me the honour, as we are all fellow-travellers and in republican countries,’ smiled the little Gaul politely. He now at dinner explained with simple frankness : ‘Madame perhaps does not know that I am a hotel-keeper myself. Mine, if I may say so, is perhaps the biggest hotel of Santiago—the Oddo ; still, I know what *can be* done in the way of cooking, even among these mountains.’

The repast over, I said farewell to the engineers, whose society had dispersed all possible feeling of loneliness during the day’s interesting journey.

‘We are bound to work slowly up the valley to-morrow, where our line is to be continued,’ said the chief. ‘Remember, should you feel too tired half-way to go on, you may count on seeing us in the evening at Las Cuevas. But it would be pleasanter for yourself to push on to Juncal, where the inn is much better, if you can.’

Retiring to my den with this assurance, the *capataz* and a lantern guided my stumbling steps across the yard. And so to bed—a fair enough seeming one—but not to rest.

I have slept through the worst thunderstorms on land, and in a severe gale or two at sea ; can dream peacefully sitting bolt upright all night in a train ; yes, and even while a steamer is coaling till daybreak, with the winches working beside my cabin port. But the test of Las Vacas was too much !

Between fevered dozes and frantic starts, making vain sorties armed with candle and insect-powder against invisible attacking foes—so the horrid hours passed.

Well, to-morrow would see me in Chili !

VIVA CHILÉ.

IT still seemed night, when a loud knock thundered at my door.

‘Señor-ita!’

Half-past five, and two cut-throat looking mule-teers were demanding my luggage, as the pack-mules started earlier than the travellers. Hastily I dressed (did not curl my hair), and, taking shelter under *the* hat, peered out shivering into coldness and darkness.

The faithful *capataz* mysteriously appeared at once, and, grasping my elbow and a guttering candle, led me past sleeping human and other animals to the room where my companions for the day were gulping down their coffee.

Being thus fortified, after warm good wishes from the Scotch innkeeper for my journey, *capataz* and self again groped out to the *corral*. Here shadowy figures helped me to mount an object, which by touch seemed my mule, the latter instantly whirling round and bolting into utter blackness among wire

fencing, confusing me like a blindfolded player when started in a children's game.

'*Ohé!* sulky animal, lazy one! Here, señora, this is the gate. Can you see yon white mule? Follow it.'

A gray form showed indistinctly ahead, which I energetically followed as guiding star, aided by whacks on my mule's flank that revealed my caretaker's presence behind.

It was starlight still as we crunched over gravel paths and splashed through shallow fords. But soon came a weird light; it grew clearer, yet retained a solemn charm. No one spoke, and the leading white mule kept gliding ahead like a ghost. Once or twice my animal shied sharply. It was at an evil-smelling carcase, or the skeleton of one of its kind, beside the sandy track. Many such ribs, picked clean by the condors, we passed that day.

Up rose the sun, though still hidden behind the high mountains; the valley widened, and the road became a good sandy one. Here we began to gallop off and on for an hour or two pleasantly enough. But if ever I ceased beating my mule with a thong whip fastened on the rope reins by a running noose, the wretch degenerated into a jolting trot.

My arm was aching, when a small boy of the troop clattered up behind, and with hideous shouts and whacks drove my lazy steed before him in an

easy canter. He kept this amusement up all day unless I implored breathing-time, while the guides laughed and clapped him on the back.

This amateur *arriero* was a French boy, sent from Santiago to Las Incas for the high air, because his chest was weak. So he told me later with grumpy shyness when we dismounted. Certainly this air must work wonders, for any unwitting onlooker would have imagined the youth's lungs to be of brass.

As the sun, now high, at last warmed us, streaming over the mountains, we arrived at Puente del Inca—the Inca's Bridge. A halt was made at a rough-looking inn, mud-walled and low-roofed. Here in summer a fair number of patients come up from Chili or the Argentine, to be cured of skin and other diseases by bathing in the natural hot springs.

We all dismounted, and Faithful—as my *capataz* might justly be named—led me over a reddish steep slope down a zigzag path to admire the famous bridge. This is a natural structure of stalactite formation, some 60 feet high by 120 feet wide, made by the mineral springs close by, beneath which the Cuevas River has cut its way for countless centuries. Here, in the cliffside also, are the baths, *i.e.*, rough-walled, gloomy grottoes, where the water is, nevertheless, clear and almost too warm.

On we went again, passing through one valley

into another, with a sandy river-bed not far away, our track always imperceptibly ascending, while we were now at a height of about 11,000 feet.

‘How grand the view must be up there, in sight of the everlasting snow!’ people have since said to me. But this is hardly so, for the valleys themselves being at so great a height, the surrounding mountains are correspondingly diminished. Some snow-clad crests, peeping over nearer brown ones, looked fine, it is true, but far less so than when seen in the clear air from the plains below, at a distance of a hundred or more miles. Still, the solitude, and the utter absence of all life, even to the smallest way-side plant, were strangely impressive.

One wide valley struck me especially as grand. Great sweeps of barren mountains surrounded it, painted in wide washes of colour. Here Tyrian purple, there reddish, then gray; and further a cliffside of palest yellow—perhaps owing to some lichen growing over its surface.

It was nearly mid-day, and the sun was pouring hotly down upon our heads, so, with a curious feeling of lassitude stealing over me, I jogged more quietly along.

Two self-constituted aides-de-camp rode on my either hand: one, the little Frenchman, who had a wonderful instinct for showing me all objects of real interest, yet never obtruding his presence; the other, an old German merchant, who lent me blue spectacles

against the sandy glare, and provided wraps, light or heavy, as sunless gorges or hot sunshine necessitated.

Faithful, outnumbered by these, fell back on the society of the *arrieros*. But as now and again my companions grew pale, and with murmured apologies turned aside, he trotted up.

‘It’s the *puna*, the mountain sickness,’ he confidentially imparted, with a grin. ‘The señorita has not got it. That is right.’

But the señorita was conscious of a growing headache, such as among severest ones she had never before experienced, an agonizing pain, when one’s head seemed bound by an iron band screwed tighter every minute excruciatingly, like a torture of the Inquisition.

This *puna*, called *sorroché* in Peru, is the effect of the rarefied air in these altitudes of 11,000 to 13,000 feet. Some travellers bleed at the nose and ears. Those with sound lungs suffer the most severely, for these organs gasp like a rabbit under an air-pump, and the heart beats with painful quickness. Whilst riding this is bearable, but the least personal exertion brings on giddiness and prostration. One naval Lieutenant assured me that the Oroya mountain line in Peru had reduced him to such sickness for a day and night as he had never before dreamt of.

Perhaps sickness might have relieved my head, which grew worse as the valley closed in to a gorge, and we wound by sharp curves overhanging a narrow

river, until at last Punta de Las Cuevas came in sight about one o'clock. This inn was like the last—some zinc-roofed buildings in an utterly lonely valley. As the *capataz* fairly lifted me off my mule, I rather wished he would dig a hole in the sand there and then and bury me.

‘How much further do we go?’—this with fluttering breath.

‘Up yonder; that is the *cumbre* (summit).’

Alas! my failing eyes saw a track zigzagging for a thousand feet up a great brownish mountain-side and disappearing at the sky-line. And yonder was only *halfway* in this day’s journey!

‘I cannot do it. I shall die of this *puna*. *Capataz*! I shall stay here all night.’

‘Señorita!’ in tones of bitter dismay. ‘But what shall I do? I am the only guide to the *tropilla*, and must lead these gentlemen over the summit to-day, but I dare not leave you, either. Even by riding back all night, I could not bring you in time for the train at Los Andes.’

The inn-keeper’s wife—an Italian—advised me to lie down for an hour before deciding, showing me to a fairly clean, mud-floored cabin. Here my head throbbed to bursting, one thought constantly beating like a sledge-hammer: ‘How shall I ever get up to that *cumbre*, like a fly crawling up a wall?’

A call to come to *comer*. I feebly rose, to find the rest of the troop as feebly lunching. The

Frenchman, looking as if he had just crossed the Channel, came towards me, kind soul! with a plate of thin bread cut in inviting morsels, but spread with suspicious white bulb shreds.

‘I supplicate you, try a little. The guides say this is the great mountain remedy,’ he begged. ‘Yes, it is garlic, but still—please try to take a little.’

Since then other Frenchmen, the Commandant and Flag-Lieutenant of the Pacific Fleet, declared, when I told them this narrative, that they would infinitely have preferred the mountain sickness. But they spake in ignorance. All I can say is, I was willing to swallow asafœtida on the chance of a cure. A cure! it was a charm. I took only a little, but felt better at once. Then, with head still heavy and back still aching, I mounted and began the ascent of the famous *cumbré* in this the Uspallata Pass.

The guides are always anxious to hurry travellers over the summit before two o’clock, for they declare that so high a wind rises in the afternoon that the mules will not face it. Even at times, they say, man and beast are obliged to lie down for hours till its force has lessened, or they are blown over into the abyss. (One wonders if any ever were!)

‘Riding up is best. It is coming down the Chilian side that is so dreadfully steep,’ announced my aides-de-camp with forcedly cheerful tones.

In my feminine opinion, riding uphill is worst. It may be a question of saddle and dress. So shutting

my eyes, out of pure fatigue, I felt the mule under me climbing up, and up, and up—as it and fate pleased. At times my eyelids unclosed lazily, getting glimpses of the narrow path, winding along great screes of loose stones, which seemed sliding into the valley far beneath, where the inn had dwindled to a toy, while our riders looked like flies scattered on the zigzags.

Ah! here comes new danger. Faithful urged his mule beside mine, drawing both animals into comparative shelter near a boulder. Some baggage-mules were cantering wildly down the track, their driver of course half a mile behind. These animals are utterly selfish, and, with truly mulish disregard for others' safety, will gallop past on the inside, their packs grazing the unwary traveller's knees, or even pushing him over the cliff-edge. Loaded with zinc sheets or metal rails, such irresponsible wayfarers are verily to be avoided.

Lastly, just as the garlic had worked so great wonders that I was beginning to feel myself again, came a stone-strewn crest. My fellow-travellers dismounted, and the *capataz*, with a beaming smile, announced, 'This is the *cumbre*.' Here, roughly speaking, we may say, was the boundary-line, and Chili lay before us.

Some of the men now walked downhill; but I, who had no wish to do so, was vehemently entreated by my faithful caretaker not to dream of following

their example. The guides turned their mules adrift with loud cries, and we all stumbled onwards with fresh courage, the path now diving into abysses of wild desolation, now rising again only to make a fresh descent. Lamentations soon arose from the pedestrians, who were twisting their ankles among the loose rolling stones, while the extra exertion made several of them suffer anew from *puna*.

For myself, I enjoyed this part of the day most ; there was enough danger to be exciting. So from three o'clock till after five I lay back on my mule's tail, so to speak, while she slid and crawled down steep and stony places, which were ' touch-and-go ' once, if not twice, when riding along a pathless slope in single file our animals were forced to jump a small stream. Had one slipped on the sharp incline, it must have been precipitated hundreds of feet into the valley below.

There is a path—and some travellers even consider it fairly good. But at one corner of this we suddenly came upon some hundreds of cattle being driven from the Argentine over into Chili. A mass of red hides and horns jammed the way hopelessly, although the *vaqueros*, mounted on lean nags, with wooden stirrups shaped like coal-scuttles, threw stones at the wearied herd, in vain efforts to make them move on. '*Vaca ! vaca !*' they yelled till they were hoarse. Our only escape was by a rough short-cut across the hillside, followed by a jump down into the path below, each

mule waiting its turn with all four feet gathered up together, at times seeming to be sitting on its hind-quarters. Again and again we had to do this as we met fresh numbers of cattle, the poor beasts, half maddened by hunger and thirst, occasionally trying to escape by breaking loose and dashing up the hill above us, where they dislodged showers of stones, that came leaping down.

A glorious bit of blue, like a large gleaming sapphire, now delighted our eyes between two high mountains. It was a lonely tarn, called the Lake of the Inca, fed by snow and ice at this great height of 12,000 feet, with never a bush, bird, or tree to enliven its solitude.

Presently, descending out of the warm afternoon sunlight into the cold, dark shade of some high mountains, there came a loud report of blasting. The new Chilian road, which is being made over the *cumbré*, was the origin of these sounds. Our *capataz* at once made us halt, and sent the younger *arriero* galloping his cranky mule at a breakneck pace ahead to see if the way was free from the danger of falling rocks. Soon came a long, monotonous valley, where I almost fell asleep in my deep saddle from fatigue as we jogged along. It was bitterly cold here in the shadows of the great hills, so besides my own rugs my companions pressed *ponchos* and shawls upon me. Then, in dead silence, we ambled on and on. Any exertion, even that of

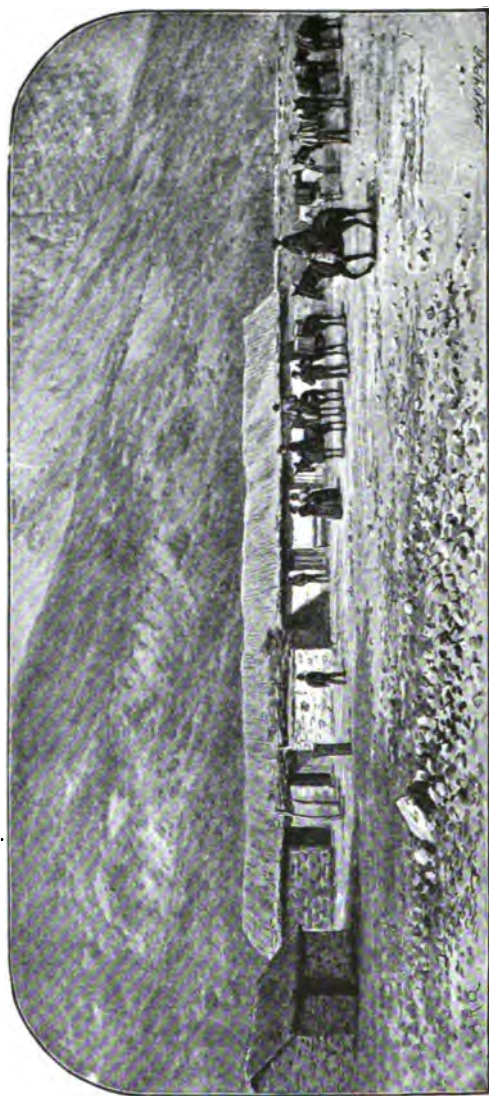
talking, might have brought back the mountain sickness.

And now came the last and worst descent of all; more cows, and wilder galloping herdsman. Some stout country damsels, riding easily, and carrying big bundles, joined us in the narrow path, anxious to flirt with our *arrieros*. As if knowing that Faithful was thus cut off from my assistance, my tired mule began to stumble once or twice badly; her pace and manners were excellent, to do her justice, except for crossness at starting.

We now got on the wide new road, where gangs of Chilian navvies were spreading the metal. Very easy will be the crossing of the Uspallata Pass soon, when this is finished. And down in a twilight valley far below were roofs—those of Juncal, our resting-place for the night.

How far off it seemed! But better this than the old *casuchas*, or postmen's shelters, which we had passed at various spots during the day. These are stone beehive huts, raised about six feet from the ground to escape the winter snows, with only a doorway, but neither fireplace nor light.

At last! at last! Was it possible we were on the level and riding up to a nice little inn, with a mountain-stream rushing close by its door? Out hurried a young Italian, or rather Piedmontese hostess, pretty, obliging, and as well dressed as if in Europe. She put her arm round my waist, for I was extremely



OLD POSADA AT JUNCAL.

tired, and assisted me into the *salle à manger*, as she called the *comedor*, speaking glibly in French, where a strong cup of tea, into which she insisted on pouring some brandy, soon revived me. The guides consider it a great mistake to take spirits during the day's journey, as these only quicken the heart's action, and so increase *puna*. But I no longer felt the latter, Juncal being not quite 8,000 feet above the sea-level—a considerable relief in altitude to one's lungs.

My room was one of three in a new wooden building apart, kept sacredly for superior travellers; our English Minister and his wife, crossing lately from Chili, had occupied these, said the signora with pride. Also other diplomats, and the English clergyman from Valparaiso—my future host. What a blessing to find a chamber that was sweet and clean, with boarded floor, walls and ceiling! There was also an excellent bed, a stool, and a window which really gave light—all luxuries, remembering the different experiences of the night before at Las Vacas.

After I had enjoyed a welcome rest of an hour or so, the little manageress came to escort me through the black darkness to dinner in the larger house. All was tidy in her inn-yard; luggage and mule saddles ranged neatly by the house-walls, not flung in a chaotic pile in a *corral*. Within, the meal was spread after the same fashion as at Las Vacas, but with what a difference!

The large room, with a bar at one end, was clean and airy ; the long table covered with a spotless white oil-cloth (and pray why not? better so than a soiled linen one with bare boards at the lower end).

‘I think we shall have a good dinner,’ confided the Frenchman to his fellow-travellers. His face, beaming with anticipation of satisfaction, grew brighter and brighter, as six courses, all fair, and one or two very good, made their appearance. ‘And madame can sit here and trust all to come from the kitchen correctly,’ he murmured, with the admiration of a critic who understands such matters. ‘It is famous.’ Then aloud to the hostess: ‘Madame, je vous en fais mes compliments.’

The little woman, who presided in simple fashion at table, bridled and smiled ; then, as a knock came at the outer door, she herself rose to open it. A ragged *peon* shambled in, but the signora greeted the vagrant with just as sweet a smile as she might have given a greater personage, showing him to a place at the far end of the board.

The momentary opening of the door had given us a glimpse of outside darkness, mountain cold, and the noise of the brook swelled by snow-water. All indoors seemed warm, bright, and cosy by contrast. When dinner was ended, and as I was retiring to my outer chamber, two fresh belated guests came in. Although roughly dressed, wearing heavy

ponchos, one guessed at a glance that they were English, and had probably some posts of authority, which proved to be the case, for next day I heard that they were English telegraphists, engaged in repairing the new underground cable over the mountains to Mendoza.

After a long night of dreamless sleep and perfect rest, I woke to find the sun already shining high. On stepping out into the sweet sharp air, I admired the amphitheatre of high hills round our little inn in the cup-shaped valley like the crater of an extinct volcano. But where were my companions and our mules? Not a sign of them to be seen. Only by the inn door lounged the *capataz*, and a small carriage waited near, with three white horses harnessed abreast. This was meant to convey my gracious self down the valley, more riding being considered inadvisable by my caretaker, besides thus giving me extra sleep, the other travellers having started two hours ago.

Now, there are not many occasions in life, it seems to me, when it is better to be a woman than a man. But plainly this was one of them. All such rare moments should be hailed with thanksgiving, which I joyfully prepared to do.

The hostess now came with suggestions of breakfast—coffee and *tortilla*, or omelette. To my surprise, her smiles were flown, her face pale and manner frightened. Just then the head English

telegraphist approached me, and entered into conversation as with a fellow-countrywoman.

‘We had a narrow escape last night,’ he gravely announced. ‘But for a mere chance we should all have been sent to kingdom come.’

It appeared that in the night a watchman found two fires lit beside a store-hut, close behind our inn, which hut was full of dynamite, kept for blasting operations on the new road. The man was only just in time to rake the embers away, or we should have been blown to pieces. On examination, two cases were found to be missing—most likely purloined by some ignorant Chilian navvy, more out of mischief than malice.

‘Probably he is sitting somewhere among the rocks on his stolen dynamite, smoking a pipe,’ remarked my new acquaintance.

No wonder the signora looked nervous.

‘Don’t mind, madame ; you are quite in the great world,’ I remarked cheeringly. ‘Why, this is like being in Paris or Barcelona.’

Back came her smile. ‘Ah, it is happy that you take it *sur ce ton là*. Quite true, we have everything in the Cordilleras, even the Anarchists.’

So with restored gaiety the little woman bade me good-bye ; and my own tribute is gladly added to the enthusiastic praises with which all travellers over the Uspallata Pass mention her name. She had a young husband too—he obeyed the behests of

his brighter partner with an air of admiring slow zeal.

Away I started in my low *coché*, that was like a village-cart, with two seats back to back. Mine was the hinder one, as the three horses galloping along sent up a little shower of gravel, which was not pleasant to face. An eighteen or twenty miles drive lay before us, down to Salto del Soldado, where we should find our fellow-travellers and the mountain train. It was a delightful drive indeed, in the brisk, high air and glorious sunshine. The valley, at first arid, soon became wildly picturesque, our road overhanging a brawling river full of boulders—of course never a fence, though the track was at places broken away.

‘See, condors! The señorita is in luck, for often one sees none,’ remarked the *capataz* from the front-seat beside the driver. He pointed to two birds, seeming the size of crows, but so high—high up on the side of a great mountain—that they must have been large indeed. Presently came two more. One, the smallest, flew so near us overhead, I could distinctly see his cruel beak, while his wings seemed about four feet outspread; the others were much bigger. One engineer friend afterwards described to me how, sometimes out surveying in a lonely valley, he had watched them sailing below, and could distinctly hear the rush of air from their huge wings as they swept past.

Small mountain-flowers now first appeared amongst the rocks ; then came bushes, grass, in varied and verdant vegetation. The mountain-side bristled with tall, pale green cacti ; low trees overhanging the foaming water were wreathed with a brilliant red parasite in full flower.

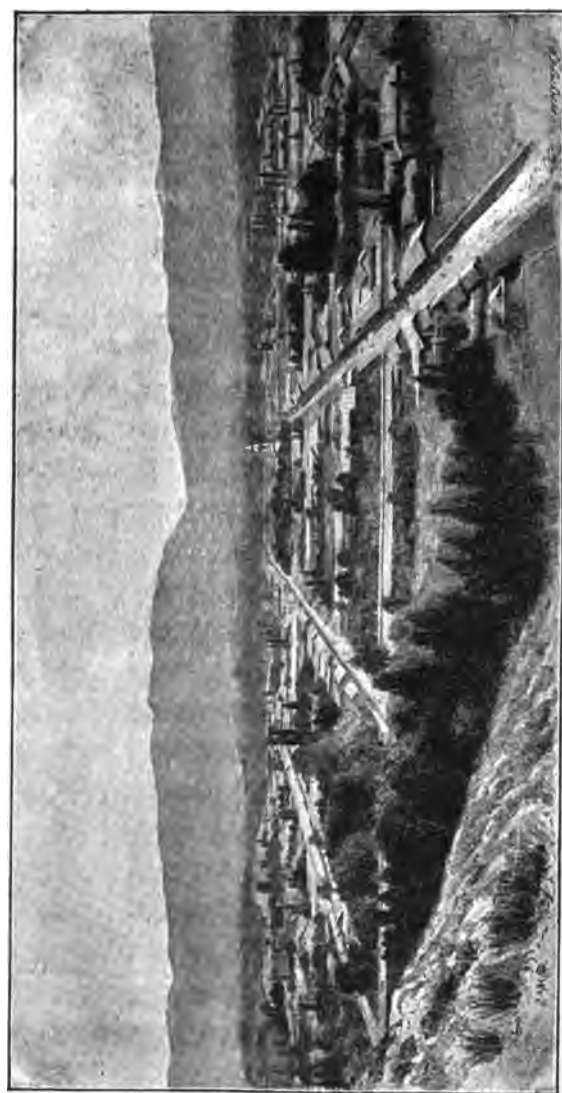
Now and again we passed little hamlets in the valley, and former post-houses, set among trees and rough ground, that made charming pictures, which memory can often glance at hereafter in its pleasant galleries.

We had started about half-past eleven, and it seemed all too soon when the three good grays slackened their gallop, and we pulled up at a larger inn than most, on the roadside. Out hurried the old German, the Frenchman, and my other travelling companions, with welcoming greetings. They were lunching in a trellised outdoor parlour in front of the inn, myrtle-roofed and walled, as it should be remarked were most of the *ranchos* in the valley down which we had come. This was my first sight of a *ramada*, which is one of the chief features in a Chilian landscape. It is made of upright poles, a few more tied crosswise, and branches wattled between. When the myrtle or other leaves are green, it is charming, but in this April autumn they were already withered. 'The winter winds will soon sweep it away without trouble,' remarked my fellow-travellers.

A feast was being given, it appeared, by the landlord, Hispa, to his French *confrère* from Santiago, and I was most courteously invited to partake of the chief dish, which had just made its appearance. This was an aged fowl, so tough that the carver's veins swelled in his forehead after the laborious task of detaching a small portion for my benefit. The bread was bullet-proof, but the coffee was good; while the company, if not select, were well-mannered folk.

Presently I wandered by myself up the hillside to see the gorge of the Soldier's Leap, or Salto del Soldado. The river has here cut its way through a very deep ravine, narrowing overhead so closely at one spot that it has given rise to the accustomed legend in such places, of how a soldier, pursued by his enemies, leapt across for safety. Among the rocks around prickly pears spread their fleshy green platters, and standing for the first time under a tall cactus, I found it was some fifteen feet high.

Now time pressed, so we drove a little way further down to Punta de los Rieles, where the mountain train was waiting; and a rough, shaky one it was, with no windows to protect us from the dust and wind. No matter! We were speeding down a rich valley, ever widening, while the sweep of hills on either side showed full of colour and variety in the yellow evening light. It was strange to see large branch-wattled *ranchos* here, of several rooms; their



SANTA ROSA DE LOS ANDES.

flooring, the hard ground swept clear of dust, with openings for windows and doors in the crazy structure. Bright scarlet and yellow cotton garments hung out drying ; women were sewing or cooking out of doors, seated on the ground, all with an air of gipsy comfort and cleanliness, which closer acquaintance must have dispelled. Prettiest of all were little brown children, with naught of clothing but a cotton shirt, running out to stare at the puffing engine. Soon came bigger farmhouses with brown mud walls, tall trees around, and wide fields. How green and refreshing the verdure of Chili appeared to our tired eyes after the red aridity of the mountains ! When the poor Argentine cattle first get down here, it is said they rush into the first meadows they meet, and can hardly be driven out before they have grazed to swelling point.

‘Look, look ! see how walls are built in this country,’ said one of my companions, pointing out a man by the roadside below us. He was standing in what seemed a high wooden box filled with mud, beating this down with blows from his heavy tamp. The wall reminded me of Devonshire ‘cob.’

Towards twilight we arrived at the pretty town of Los Andes, or properly Santa Rosa de los Andes. Here many travellers spend the night in a fairly good hotel, so as to enjoy the scenery on the following morning of what is called the Garden of Chili. But not caring to remain alone, and having some

months of stay in the country before me, I preferred hastening on to Valparaiso. Driving across Los Andes to the other station came my first amazement at the ramshackle Chilean street-flys.

Again we started, this time in a large train and Pullman-car, darkness falling so swiftly that soon none of the vineyards, which are said to be famous in the country around, were discernible. It was between eight and nine o'clock when we reached the junction of Llai-Llai, an Indian word signifying 'Winds.' Here my fellow-travellers all branched off to Santiago, and for the first time on my journey I expected to be really left alone. But, on stepping out into the pitchy darkness of the platform, my ear caught the sound of my own name, pronounced in English inquiring accents. And following the clue, I met an old friend face to face, my expectant host, the English chaplain at Valparaiso, who had kindly come thus far to meet and greet me on the way.

What a capital dinner we had in the wide restaurant of Llai-Llai, famous throughout Chili for the cheapness and excellence of its fare ; and how we talked ! Then the real luxury of the next train, with its velvet arm-chair in a big saloon car, was delightful indeed to one's tired frame. It was eleven o'clock when we entered Valparaiso, seeing its wide crescent of lights reflected in the dark waters of the bay. Indeed, for some time past, we had been skirting the Pacific Ocean.

Then came a short walk across the paved Intendenza Square, a dive into a narrow alley, and up long steep flights of wooden steps, ending apparently in a winter watercourse that had washed a gully in the centre, against which my companion warned me. Overhead hung a little white house, seeming in mid-air, a gas-light outside, which was our beacon.

A few minutes of what I deemed mountain climbing, and we gained the terrace above. Then came the pleasure of being warmly welcomed by my hostess: 'So you have really come to Chili *at last!*'

VALPARAISO, THE VALE OF PARADISE.

VALPARAISO ! Now, why should this town be called the Vale of Paradise ? has been often asked. One lady a year or two ago guessed the reason. 'When I came down the coast from Peru, I knew,' she said triumphantly. 'I can tell you that, after those hundreds of miles of awful barren cliffs, it really did look green here. The old Spaniards must have thought the same when they sailed into the bay.'

Imagine a deep bay with two long and dull streets on the sea-level, all wharves, counting-houses, merchants' offices. Close behind these parallel streets rise steep cliffs, ending in high, reddish hills that give a fire-glow to the landscape. For a considerable distance above the town these hills are thickly covered with villas of the English and German residents, mingled with the *despachios* (grocery and drinking shops) of the people, and picturesque but ill-smelling hovels. Higher still, against the sky-line, the glowing sweep of hills is 'splotted' with dark green. Forgive the ugly

word! but to say 'splashed' might imply more continuous verdure, and the bushes in question only grow in round and separate clumps, browsed about by donkeys and some few goats. In spring, folk



CHILIAN ON HORSEBACK.

say, the hills are green enough, and the wild-flowers make Chili a very garden. But in my autumn visit, for winter begins towards the end of May, this was how the landscape looked after the summer's heat

and strong dust-winds, which, however, are a blessing to the town in blowing away evil smells and germs of infection.

Valparaiso may be described as a cosmopolitan seaport. Put it down anywhere else in the world of commerce, and it would be in place. Some Spanish families certainly live here in flats above the shops, down the long tree-lined, tram-laid principal street; but these hardly give the town any individuality. *They* think the English mad to strain their lungs and tire their knees climbing daily up and down the frightful hills. The English proudly retort that they like fresh air, and that if ever a severe earthquake does come, followed by a tidal wave, not a house below but will be washed into the deep sea. And not one overhead but may be engulfed if the ground yawns, as at Mendoza, and certainly all may fall, reply the easy-going inhabitants of the lower level, with smiles and shrugs.

There are no sights whatsoever down in the town, excepting always a splendid monument to a sea-hero, Prat, in the principal square of the Intendencia. It was made in Paris, and the four figures guarding its base are so full of vigour and life that one finds one's self enviously murmuring, 'We have no statue as fine in London!' Soon after arriving, my host took me out one afternoon 'to look round,' and amply satisfied my curiosity in two hours.

Our terrace on the Cerro Alegre, or Hill of Joy,

had two approaches; one the watercourse way already described; the other—102 crazy wooden steps, which I carefully counted soon after arriving, eked out by a few asphalt slides. Prancing down these steps (as some were very high and all were unequal, the expression may be permitted), we entered a wicked street, that of the brokers. This is the Stock Exchange, and from nine till dusk the pavements are crowded with groups of eager men, for stockbroking is at present laughingly described as ‘about the only paying profession in Chili.’ No lady alone, or even two ladies, would be bold enough to risk the passage of the Calle Prat, ‘for those men do nothing but gossip and make remarks.’ Individually the said men are the fair speakers’ own fathers, brothers, and husbands, and excellent in each capacity. But collectively they form a street club, and everyone knows what horrid places clubs are for gossip. Now, of all towns Valparaiso is the most inquisitive. ‘So, my dear, you were down in the market yesterday morning, and seen buying potatoes and cauliflower’—thus I have heard one lady accosting another; but never, let it be quickly added, have I heard less real scandal and fewer malicious remarks than among this kind and warm-hearted colony of English and Germans.

Leaving our ‘characters behind us’ among the brokers, we crossed the Plaza, taking a tram through the low town where sailor men from the foreign

vessels love to congregate. Presently we alighted close by the farthest town lift, which hoisted us giddily up the cliffside of a vividly red hill. Here a fine naval school is perched on a small plateau of bare earth, with a precipice in front and dangerous paths winding down the farther steep slopes. Below lay a fort ; in the bay some men-of-war of the fine Chilian navy. One of these, the *Arturo Prat*, is worked almost entirely by electricity, being the very newest and most costly of its kind ; and it is reported that, the European engineers who brought out the ship having been dismissed from a feeling of national pride, the Chilians who replaced them are sometimes at their wits' end to manage its delicate machinery. The navy is much honoured in Chili, perhaps because its service is not compulsory, as in the army.

Back we hie by the same lift and tramway, take a glance at the long street where are the principal hotels, a few English tailors and French *modistes'* shops, with tiny *plazas* and fairly good churches. The public garden is here, too, so microscopic that I supposed it attached to a *café*, and humbly apologize. Are not its two marble lions famous?—brought hither with much other spoil of statues, pictures, and books, from Lima after the war with Peru.

Towards five o'clock the pretty Chilian girls promenade demurely up and down this street, dressed in French style. 'Watch the funny way

the ladies here embrace, patting each other on the shoulders. Nothing struck *me* more when I first came,' had said a bright-eyed countrywoman.

This evening I saw them. Groups of ladies rustled together, kissed with gentle effusiveness, and, raising plump hands, went pat-pat-pat upon each other's backs first on the right side, then on the left. When introduced, they shake hands warmly ; a mere bow would mean extreme coldness.

But at this hour all the Englishwomen are at tea on the steep hillsides. Whirr ! let us mount skywards in the near lift and join them. This lift shoots us out on the hill of the English Church, a large, handsomely-windowed building, but forbidden a spire because of its heretical creed. Time was, and not long ago, when foreign services were held only in supposed private houses, and winked at rather than permitted here, as still in Peru. But Chili is broadening her mind now in many ways.

The ordinary day here begins for all Englishmen and many women with a ride between six and eight o'clock on the *camina cintura*, or encircling road. In sharp-frosted or misty June mornings, in already warm and dusty November ones, gal-lop, gal-lop, they are all cantering round the sharp turns of this road, its deep *quebradas*, or ravines, lying unprotected on one side, and stray kids bleating on the rugged hillside above. Everyone can afford a horse in Chili : 'A good one may cost ten pounds ; the

best in the land (except an imported English thoroughbred) could easily be got for forty pounds,' said several men to me. Back they clatter to breakfast, for by nine o'clock all the offices and banks in town are humming with work till one, when strings of ponies are seen up side-streets awaiting their masters, who will ride uphill for a hasty lunch. Work is then resumed till six o'clock, always excepting on mail-nights, when *patrons* and clerks must sit up till perhaps midnight, and if a *fiesta* falls on that date, great is the lamentation. With what eagerness we all study the list of *vapores* till the mail comes in! Strange, this feeling of waiting five weeks before your written words reach eyes in England, ten before an answer can come back from those you love.

One morning, as I was dressing for nine o'clock breakfast, came a sudden rattling of my window. There was an accompanying rumble, so like the noise of some big waggon outside that—forgetting this was not London, and no vehicle could pass on our narrow hill-terrace—I quietly continued my ablutions. Next came a kind of roll under the floor, with creakings of the walls and rattling of the door and window. Again! From the *patio* arose the voices of Carmen and Clorinda, the maids, crying piteously, 'O por Dios!' Already I had guessed this was an earthquake, and sprang to open the door lest it should jam. It seems it was a severe

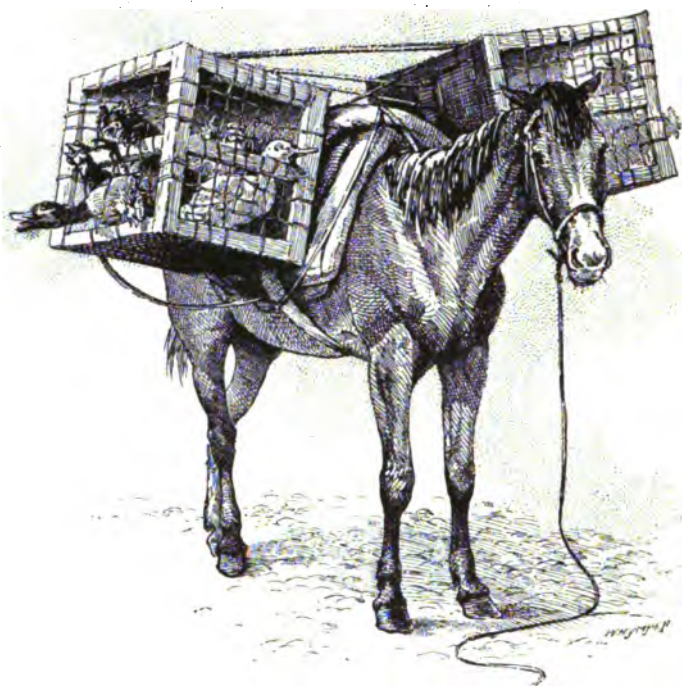
shock, though here there are seldom dangerous ones, like those which submerge the other seaports all along the coast to Callao. A week later, sitting with Mrs. Wetherall at night in her bungalow, came a rattling apparently in the roof. 'Rats!' I exclaimed, while she breathed 'Earthquake!' and a heave that followed under the floor was undeniably a queer sensation. I counted from seven to eight decided shocks during my four months' stay.

It is a lovely morning, still and warm as earthquake weather. Going out to the shady veranda and little garden-plot after breakfast, the cries of the usual morning vendors are heard. One man comes driving some turkeys; another has a string of partridges, or willow cages full of fresh-caught quails or singing birds; while the vegetable boy on his pony, and the *polliero*, with fowl and duck-coops, instead of panniers, on his nag, are truly Chilian sights, and picturesque withal.

Then my bright hostess whisks me down the hill-steps to go shopping, thrilling fiery-cross news passing round, after one of the usual fires, that adjacent shops were 'selling off.' It is frosty, even cold, in the shady streets, but we pant in the sun climbing up to our Cerro Alegre. Then, hastily getting into smarter gowns, we toil higher yet uphill, bound for a 'hen' lunch. As everyone pleasant—and their number was many—in Valparaiso had kindly called upon me, my popular hostess and myself were soon

head over ears in debt for visits, paying which often took the form of these ladies' luncheons.

'This heat is extraordinary for April,' remarked my friend, as we paused for breath halfway up a.



CHILIAN POULTERER'S STOCK IN TRADE.

steep road of rough stones imbedded in dust. There was a lovely backward view of the bay, the air being so transparent that, in spite of smoke-haze from the town, the vessels lying below, with their frequently

bright red hulls, looked quite near. Yonder, clear and sharp, gleamed Aconcagua, although 120 miles distant, his snow-crested head 25,000 feet high. In all the world only Chimborazo in Peru is a higher mountain-brother, with Mount Everest in the Himalayas highest of all three.

So up we climb, past gullies like earth-shoots, with the queerest shanties ever seen clinging to their sides. Here are rows of middle-class dwellings, all light framework, adobe-filled, as best to withstand earthquakes. Terraces follow, of uninteresting two-storied English homes, where the only Chilian sign is the darkened drawing-rooms, into which one literally gropes. Scattered on steep places are delightful-looking old houses, single-storied, built round *patios*, and surrounded by verandas and flower-plots.

Generally the road owns an asphalt or brick side-path, with wooden curb and frequent steps. From this comparative vantage-point we pass picturesque groups in the impossible roadway, now deeply dusty, but that winter rains will soon make a miry sea, two or even three feet deep. Perhaps a crazily-high glass *coche* (such as one sees in pictures of George III.'s day) scrambles by, with its three horses abreast; two scorn to attempt the hill, and simply jib if any driver rashly tries to break this equine custom. Or three mules in a cart slither down a sloping dustbin, dignified by the title of

calle; or, again, some gray donkeys come laden with the furniture of a family. The first donkey is carrying pots, pans, and a kitchen-chair; the second little beast only shows ears and feet beneath a bulging pile of crimson mattresses; the third totters under a huge barrel that sways perilously, although balanced by stools and boxes. These, driven by brown, screaming urchins exactly like Murillo's beggar boys, make 'a picture.'

Plenty of flowers hang in masses over garden-gates or walls, through which doors, often unpainted, give entrance to the pretty house beyond. Lovely flowers, blue plumbago and geraniums growing wild as weeds and high as bushes, with mimosa trees, called here *aromo*, which in July will make a yellow glory in the land. Everyone tells me that in spring Chili is all one garden of flowers; even the waste sands down by the sea are purple with them.

Arriving at our destination, after the usual pre-fatory regrets that 'No gentlemen can be ever had here for lunch, you know,' comes an invariable query, 'Have you seen the mountains to-day? Aconcagua is looking *lovely*!' This subject takes the place of the weather in England.

Here is one small difference between England and Chili. At home everyone grumbles at, in Chili each is continually praising, the climate. 'It is perfect,' all assured me with enthusiasm; then added, with

out the least depreciation of tone, 'though certainly the 'summer winds are very disagreeable.' How satisfactory it is to see people so satisfied! Even in winter I scarcely heard them complaining, though the heavy rains and 'norther' winds were partly unroofing houses and flooding drawing-rooms, and though most homes contain but one sitting-room fireplace for the whole family, or none. (That one is often unlighted, as people born out here adopt Chilian ideas, and declare that colds are always taken by going from the single warmed room into the other cold ones.)

The 'hen' lunches proved to be solid banquets, beginning with soup and ending with grapes, or *chirimoyas*, though it was hardly the season for these delicious custard-apples. I was much struck by the word 'No' used by all English people here when asking anything. 'Do you like Chili—No?' said a young girl; the negative uttered just as it was on my lips to assure her that I liked Chili very much indeed. Another lady electrified me by the remark, 'You see I have got a husband—No?' And I could hardly restrain an eager disclaimer of being supposed to dispute so large and cheerful a fact as the gentleman's individuality. This 'No' is a Spanish idiom, either copied from Chilian friends or learned in the nursery. For the little English children here—*wa-was*, as all babies are called, evidently from an Indian word—learn to prattle

first in the soft Castilian, which gives them later a kind of singing accent in speaking English.

Of course, everyone asked me, 'What do you think of Chili?' immediately answering themselves with a 'Though, of course, you have hardly seen it as yet.'

But I could say that many things struck me at once as picturesque, notably the *mantos*, or black shawls, worn by all the poorer women over their heads and shoulders as daily costume, and by rich and poor ones universally for going to Mass. There is quite an art in pinning these shawls prettily tight to the back hair and at the chin; while everyone knows that swathing them gracefully round the body is a hereditary gift of the Spanish women, just as Sappho boasted the women of her isle raised their draperies more gracefully than others about the ankles. To see some five or six of these black bodies gossiping together in the street gives one quite a curious idea as of nuns broken loose. Ladies wear silk shawls or embroidered china *crêpe* ones; their humbler sisters are content with cashmere or alpaca. Surely, it is a pleasing idea that all classes should thus appear garbed alike in the House of God, the Court of Heaven. Even English visitors peeping into a church here are expected to put on a *manto*; a bonnet would be quite disrespectful head-gear.

To return to our lunch. Married women are

chiefly invited to these parties, as also to dinners. Otherwise the many and pretty girls in the English colony have the 'best of it' in all amusements. 'We poor wives are quite out of everything here,' many regretfully told me. Even brides, eighteen years old, find themselves set at once on the shelf, while their elder unmarried sisters are still enjoying the amusements natural to their age.

On feast-days, for instance, a general picnic of young people will be got up, when one young and favourite 'Mrs.' is invited to chaperon some thirty young men and maidens.

In spite of this doleful prospect, I heard nearly all the girls were engaged to be married! Weddings were thick as blackberries during my stay, and a good thing too. For though Valparaiso owns clubs, young men, wearied with long days of work, find it irksome after dining at these to climb uphill to their lodgings; while life for unmarried Englishwomen, excepting a very few who have family duties that keep their energies healthy and minds sweet, seems sadly empty of daily work. This last was the withering end of our ancestresses in the days of 'Cranford'; gentility above all things, economy, tea, and gossip—and the snows of early winter at an age when women nowadays are still enjoying the full summer or ripe autumn of the existence God gave them to be useful in to their fellow-beings, and therefore thankful for with praise.

But even these bright girls do not have—if they only knew it—at all so varied, and therefore agreeable, lives as in England.

‘What do you do on ordinary days, not *fiestas*? What fun have you among yourselves?’ I asked some of my young friends.

There was the early morning ride, they said. Some shopping, of course, and perhaps making their own dresses; one afternoon a week sewing clothes for the poor. Then occasionally, in summer, eight or nine girls will ride out together past Viña to the sea with two *mozos*—not like English grooms in livery, but stable-boys—useful to keep *huasos* from being rude, and who carry picnic baskets and bathing-gowns. At Salinas the damsels undress among the rocks, swim, and then lunch, sing songs, and ride home. Other times a moonlight picnic is got up with young men who are still unengaged, and have some energy left after the day’s work. A little inn is generally the goal, to which they bring their own beefsteaks, cooking these in the ashes on a skewer of *boldo* wood, which gives the meat a delicious flavour. Above all, surprise-parties are a usual resource when society seems a trifle dull.

A surprise-party is managed as follows. Two or more bright spirits, natural leaders of their respective sexes, agree to have a dance, fix its date, the number of youths and damsels who shall share in the festivity, and, above all, on the house of the good-natured host

and hostess who it is believed will not object to being 'surprised.' A hint is judiciously thrown out to these : Would they *much* mind if some evening——? Should they not frown, the lady of the house suddenly hears after dinner a volley of cheerful rat-tat-tats. Hey presto! the house is invaded by some sixty merry-makers, bearing baskets of provisions and wine. In a trice the drawing-room ornaments are whisked away, drugget is laid down, supper laid in the twinkling of an eye, and a cheery dance follows. Some of the guests may be unknown to the master and mistress of the house ; their own best friends are perhaps missing ; but these are among the chances of a surprise-party, which, failing a revolt of the uninvited married, is a most amusing institution that promises to flourish.

Luncheon having lasted from two till well past three, I imagined that soon after returning to the drawing-room we should naturally take our leave and an afternoon walk. Not so !

It was whispered to me that *where you lunch you drink tea* ! or there is risk of being supposed bored by your entertainment. So we all rested after our many courses of lunch, inwardly hoping for appetite to face more delicacies at five o'clock tea of hot scones and sweet Spanish cakes. Many ladies produced little bags, thoughtfully brought with them, containing their work—of that kind euphemistically described as *white*. On Tuesdays the cream of the

English matrons met at each other's houses in turn to sew for the poor from three to five. This seemed their chief recreation, with excellent results. I was always kindly invited, buttons and tapes being reserved for me, when it became known that, except for these and light millinery, my

‘fingers rather the gray goose-quill knew
Than the gold needle.’

‘How the married ladies must talk *us* over!’ shuddered the bachelors.

There are few poor in Valparaiso, either foreign or Chilian, so sewing and some visits to the hospital are the only outlets for the indwelling charity of most British bosoms. But during the late war the English ladies nursed the wounded with praiseworthy devotion. Of other amusements there are football, cricket, and polo at Viña del Mar, or the Vineyard by the Sea, with occasional balls and acting; much music; reading and debating clubs.

One day my hosts took me to see Viña del Mar, the Brighton of Valparaiso. Lying at the mouth of a river valley, it is reached in twenty minutes by a train running past bays where in ‘northers’ the waves break over the line. Rocks and waste grounds were brilliant with yellow *eschscholtzia*; though this Californian flower is not indigenous to Chili, I was told, but has naturalized itself. We whizzed past charming villas half hidden in *heliotrope*, *banksia*

roses, bananas, and pepper-trees, their gay aspect reminding one of the French Riviera. Taking a *coche*, my friends (the English chaplain and his wife) drove me half a mile away to see the famous *cancha*, or racecourse, where the grand-stand boxes are surely unique, being excavated in a steep hillside, and overgrown with creepers, passion-flowers, and roses.

A rifle-match was going on between a team from the flagship, H.M.S. *Royal Arthur*, and Valparaíso ; for the Pacific fleet lay just then in harbour under the command of Admiral Stephenson. Some of the officers came to talk to us, one to claim acquaintance with me as a friend of his family, though we had not met since his naval cadetship days. These pleasant surprises continually occurred wherever I travelled, meeting English-speaking folk. In how many instances we mutually knew somebody at home who was a foundation to our cordial acquaintanceship ; or they were good enough to say they knew me through my books.

Leaving the green *cancha*, the one level spot for miles round where public games can be held, we drove to lunch at the Viña hotel. It was a charming surprise, with its flower-terrace in front, inner courtyard, and shady walks and pleasure-grounds stretching behind high up among the hills, overgrown with blue gums and coppice. Here Mr. Kennedy, our English Minister, was staying, who

kindly invited me to pay a visit to the Legation in Santiago a fortnight afterwards. It may not come amiss here to note a walk in the neighbourhood I specially liked, when paying two pleasant visits in Viña later, towards August. We went to see the grounds of a rich Chilian lady here, celebrated for her gardens. Entering through high gates, the wide avenue was so grass-grown I privately mistook it for waste land. But this was not owing to neglect on the part of the many gardeners, I was assured, rather that vegetation and weeds grow rank in Chili; while also the mistress was absent in Santiago for the winter season. This garden interested me, being almost a jungle of rare trees, sheltered under steep hills clothed with wood. Here were Brazilian araucarias, which bear *piñon* fruit, Indian bamboos, and foreign palms. The glass-houses were overgrown with masses of *tropæolum*, which grows wild over the hills; the scarlet kind, called *soldado* (soldier) by the natives, was now in full blow, the yellow just beginning to blossom, but the blue lags till later.

Passing a grove of plantains, which I could never distinguish from their brethren bananas, except by the fruit, which is coarser and considered a vegetable, we began climbing garden-paths winding for a mile or more up the ravine. The pleasure-grounds differed from English ones in that under high trees, or by a tumbling brook, one came suddenly on garden-plots, pansy-beds or strawberries, with re-

curring surprise. Leaving the blue gums and graceful pepper-trees behind, we emerged higher still in a coppice of Chilian bamboos, and other low trees or shrubs with an insignificant leaf. I was going to examine one, when my friend cried out :

‘Come away! That is the *lichtré*’ (or *litré*, as some spell it). ‘It is so poisonous that it will bring out a skin rash if you touch it, or even stay near it. My child has been often unable to go to school because she played near one. Our servants’ remedy is to chew maize and lay it on as a poultice. As that is a disagreeable idea, I have tried dry, pounded maize, which answers just as well.’*

Under the miniature hanging wood of bamboo sprang a thick carpet of maidenhair fern. We gathered three kinds at least of fresh fronds : one very large-leaved variety ; a smaller one with crinkled edge ; and lastly, what seemed green spray trembling on fairy-like stalks.

The open hill stretched away inland for miles, only dotted by thorny bushes and a rare occasional palm—more’s the pity. Not so long ago these Chilian palms are said to have been plentiful, but constant tapping for the delicious palm-honey (*miel de palma*) has killed many groves. Grown wiser

* In the late Miss North’s ‘Life and Travels,’ when visiting Chili to paint its rare flowers, she describes the *litré* as poisonous, in her opinion, from an invisible insect that infests the bark.

nowadays, the Chilians only draw honey from the trees at regular seasons.

Returning to the garden by another woodland way, we passed *peumo*-trees. These smell like bay if their leaves are crushed. The fruit is greedily eaten by peasants and children, and when cooked is not disagreeable for those who like a strong candle-grease flavour. But of many Chilian native trees, I most admired the glossy green leaf and strong-scented white flower of the *boldo*, which makes one wish to see it introduced into English pleasure-grounds. At every turn the fragrance of the white pittisporum filled the air; and there were big yellow bignonia-trees overhead with varieties of small begonia flowers underneath.

Among all Chilian flowers, the floripondio (pendent flower) struck me as so universal that it might be the national emblem. Its long yellow or reddish trumpets droop in every garden-plot, and Chilian old wives can reduce swelled faces by simply laying on its leaf. But the white datura (*Hyoscyamus muticus*) has a worse reputation, for in Brazil the Indian women are said to poison enemies or faithless spouses by its means, no trace being left. And here I may quote other Chilian native flowers, calendrinias, puyas, and mesembryanthemum, which covers the rocks by the sea with its rose or cream-coloured stars, reminding one of the blue Mediterranean shore at Costebelle; the fuchsia and myrtle grow wild over the hills, with

aloes, cacti, prickly pears ; and among many more there are oxalis, hybiscus, wild artichoke, and cardoon.

Viña del Mar has its own little society of both Chilian and English families, the men leaving daily by train for their work in town. Many of these *quintas*, or villas, are pleasantly wedded in my mind with Anglo-Chilian hospitality.

One impression especially remains a picture in my memory. It is that of a wooden house-veranda raised above the garden ; an arbutilon-tree is golden with blossoms, and a cloud of humming-birds are whirring over these, shrilly scolding in notes far sharper than so many sparrows. These *picaflores* are a dark-green kind, the males with heads of burning gold. Their advent heralds winter here in the lowlands ; in summer they inhabit the mountains.

FEAST-DAYS IN CHILI.

‘WILL you drive out with me next feast-day and see our little country-house at Plasilla?’

This invitation was given by one of my new friends in Chili, an Englishwoman.

Now, Plasilla is the site of the great battle where the Opposition finally defeated Balmaceda in the late Civil War, marching into Valparaiso that same evening. Waterloo and Sedan are dwarfed in comparison with its importance, or so all Chilians, and some foreign residents, apparently think.

The kind proposal being eagerly accepted, away we started one morning in my friend’s waggonette. Her husband and two more of their large and cheery family went on foot by a short-cut across the hills. Three schoolboys were riding their ponies. It was a merry little party. The July air was so keen that, despite the warm sun, we were glad of our fur cloaks, as, after passing through the low town, we re-ascended to the upper Zorras Hills, and on by a lonely road winding up the face of a mountain-ridge.

At its sharp inner curves the road was often broken away where the wheel of some ox-cart had slipped over. One such cart we passed, its great weight alone saving it from rolling into the gorge below, the team of eight oxen placidly awaiting as many more before trying to raise the mass. On these lonely roads the ox-waggon is especially dangerous, for the drivers go to sleep, as one did the other day here, and, falling off, was crushed by the wheel. His team slowly paced on for two miles till stopped, piloting their cart round the looplike bends by either habit or instinct.

As we climbed up 1,000 feet, the scenery took on its Chilian wintry character, the wide hill-ridges around being coloured a peculiarly dark-green shade owing to their low scrub of wild-fuchsia, myrtle, and cacti ; but absolutely treeless ; lonely. Far beyond rose the nearer Cordilleras, sharply outlined and blue as indigo. The reddish haze in which they are bathed in hot weather, which had struck me so much on first arriving, had long vanished.

At last we gained a table-land on the hill-top, all furrowed with water runnels, deep enough to hide, as they possibly once did, rows and rows of soldiers. This was the battlefield of Plasilla. Here was the Government position, and here their cannon were placed. Up from yonder valley rushed the Opposition troops, though the ground is so steep, and cut down the gunners ; the fighting then became hand-

to-hand, desperate, the terrible Chilian *corvos* (curved knives) being brought into play.

Descending into the valley, a few hundred yards farther came a wood and garden wall; and here was my friend's country home, nicknamed by passing carters 'The House-in-the-Hole.'

'Ours is only a place for the children to spend the summer months in,' explained Mrs. C. 'Something like a farmhouse in England which townsfolk take for the holidays; but it is quite Chilian, and that may interest you.'

Passing through high wooden gates, the carriage stopped beside a long *barra*, or wooden bar, to which the schoolboys' ponies stood tied. Such a bar is invariably seen outside every *rancho* and farmhouse in Chili, and a favourite rough game, literally horse-play, is called 'pushing at the bar,' and played by some dozen riders. The one-storied farmhouse was built round a square court, closed by massive wooden doors.

'See the marks of the rifle-bullets through them, and where the lock was partly blown away,' said my host, who now joined us. And he told me of how these gates were kept strongly barred by the gardener's family while *Plasilla* was being fought, so that the victorious Opposition soldiers vainly tried to enter, suspecting that routed Government men were sheltered within. My friend's dwelling-rooms were partly closed, furniture piled, beds sheeted

as in England under similar winter conditions, but, still, one could see how pretty and cool they would be in summer-time. Across the *patio* were the kitchen and offices, while at one place the veranda of the court was widened into a concrete square, vine-trellised overhead. This was the summer open-air *comedor*, or dining-room.

After a brief house inspection, we searched for flowers in a plot where violets and half-frozen roses lingered, despite the July winter. Farther away was the large kitchen-garden, where Mr. C. especially bade me notice the popular Chilean vegetable *papas de apio*, or celery potatoes. He thought this celery but slightly different from our own kind. It is not earthed up, and the tubers, served with white sauce, resemble Jerusalem artichokes, but with the strong celery flavour. Surely this would be an excellent addition to the list of our English vegetables.

Such a merry lunch as we had now in the parlour, unpacked and laid by ourselves picnic fashion, while the swarm of boys out-talked each other, chattering of their ponies, of the *tortolita* or wood-pigeon one of them had just shot outside; and how three of them were going to school in England by the next steamer, not to return to their beloved Chili for some years, as their elder brothers had done before them.

Then discourse turned on the peasantry around, whose ways my friends had come to know intimately

in summer-times of country seclusion. As to their food, 'Our workmen,' they said, 'take an early *desayuno*, or breakfast, of a piece of unleavened bread called *pan blanco*, with a cup of hot *cedron* tea.'

'*Pan blanco* is fine stuff when fresh,' exclaimed one boy.

'Very heavy,' murmured his father.

'And the *cedron* tea is made of the leaves of a wild shrub growing here,' volunteered another boy volubly. 'The leaves smell very sweet, and are dried; then they pour on boiling water, and add sometimes just a pinch of real tea.'

'But you should tell, too, that in England it is called sweet-scented verbena,' added his mother, delighting me by the information.

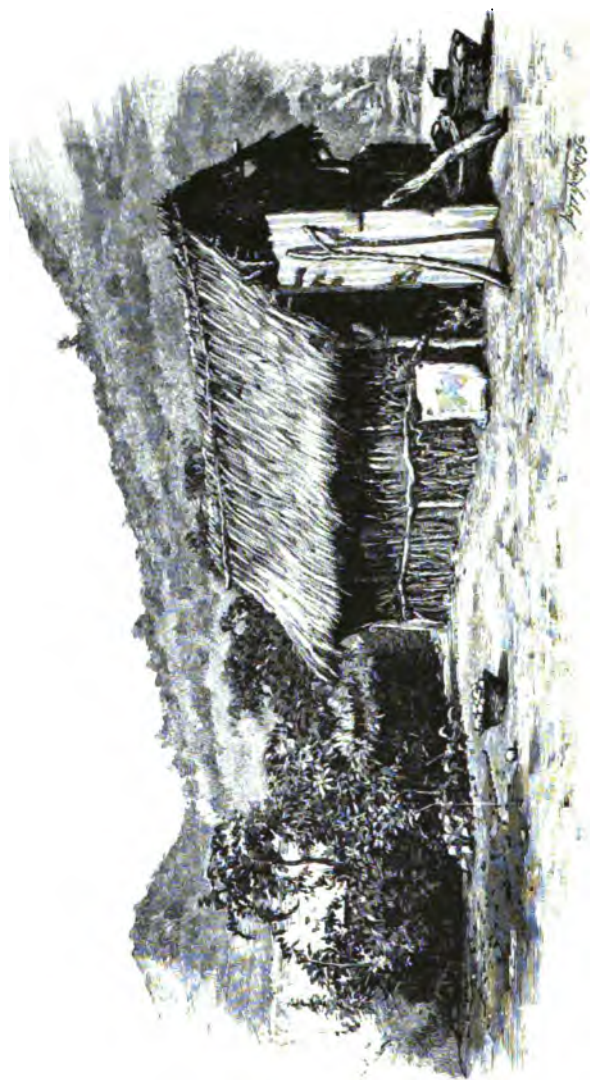
'It's excellent to drink, any way,' chorused all the boys.

My hostess, who from long residence in the country spoke Spanish like a native, or, as she herself laughingly said, like a peasant, took the liveliest interest in the *huasos*, their herb-lore, customs, and especially their native songs and music, for they love improvising and playing on the harp and guitar. Many other English-women agreed with her in assuring me that the native knowledge of healing plants, plainly handed down to the Chilians from their Indian ancestors, is excellent. Chilian nurses will cure their English charges of whooping-cough by giving tea made of

hilo (a herb of which we vainly tried to find the English name), with syrup of violets to ease the cough. And this cure answers so well that English doctors now often adopt it. Again, a small piece of bark of the *quillai*-tree put in boiling water is excellent for washing one's clothes or one's hair; while the handsome *boldo*-tree is of much virtue in liver ailments.

And now a long-standing promise was revived—that I should see a *samacueca*, which is danced in every *rancho* and inn and festive gathering in Chili every Sunday and feast-day through the year. A friendly message was sent to the owners of a neighbouring *rancho*, asking if they expected friends that afternoon, as an English señora wished to see a *cueca*. Quickly there followed an answer that, though having no company, they would themselves dance with pleasure.

'The Chilian peasants are very independent, and like gentry to be *muy corriente*, easy and pleasant in intercourse,' explained my hostess, as we picked our steps up the deeply muddy road, such as folk living in England could never imagine. Our goal was a mud-walled cottage with a projecting roof that made a long porch. (The meanest *ranchos* in the country are nearly all thus built, even though only *ramadas* of wattled branches, or hovels of cane and mud with bulrush-thatched roofs—savage huts, indeed, through which the winds can whistle.) Seven



A RANCHO IN CHILI.

or eight riders were ranged by a long *barra* outside the *rancho* as we approached, and four of these—women—instantly left. Perhaps they were shy of drinking *chicha*—the native tippie—in our presence, for both it and bread were sold here. One carried her month-old babe, another seemed ill, but all rode easily, looking not unlike Irishwomen in their stuff skirts, with their *mantos* or black shawls pinned tight over their heads. Four men in *ponchos* remained, drinking the biggest glasses I ever saw full of *chicha*, and wearing straw hats as large as a cart-wheel. (Felt ones are also worn in winter, gray, with gay tassels, and of a width and weight almost incredible to the imagination.)

We were received with cordial welcomes on entering the living room of the *rancho*, which was lit from the open door, for the only window was closely shuttered; perhaps the glass was broken. My first impression was one of incongruity, and again thoughts of Ireland recurred. The unswept floor was, as is usual here, of large square mud-tiles, which soon grow soft and dirty; the doors were unpainted and ill-fitting. Yet there was a good table, also dirty, new cane bent-wood chairs, and an excellent bed, where lay an invalid child. On one side was the store-room, or *dispensa*, filled with implements, firewood, and a *chicha* barrel. On the other side I caught a glimpse of bedroom walls thickly covered with newspaper pictures. There

was no fireplace—all cooking here, as in the Argentine, is done out of doors over the charcoal *brasero*, or in the round mud oven.

Three youngish women were sitting in the semi-gloom against the wall, dressed in pink cotton blouses and dark skirts. One had a potato 'head-ache patch' on her forehead. These patches, stuck on with starch, are a common remedy in Chili and Peru for all manner of ailments. One not only sees peasant women, but maidservants wearing them; often a green patch of bean or pea husk. But men put their faith more in cigarette-paper, of which they wear patches as gravely as their spouses. And an English gentleman, with a large estate in the North, told me that his wife kept rolls of coloured tissue-paper—pink, green, or blue—to dispense to their labourers as a sovereign charm in the latter's eyes.

The mistress of the cottage was an old granny, whose head was so marvellously tied up in white cloths that she reminded one of a picture of Lazarus in his grave head-gear. With friendly hand-shakes and pattings of her neighbour, Mrs. C., she discoursed of her rheumatics, and raised a big black bottle of mineral-water to her mouth. After a long chat, José, the son, was called in from the *barra*, where he was tightening his waist-belt in a shy preparatory fashion. His Sunday shirt was very white; his gray coat and trousers new, if unpic-

turesquely European. Waistcoat and tie he apparently despised, a sign of individuality that slightly cheered me. For what a dull world it will be to the eyes when all mankind are dressed pretty much alike in cheap German or English suits.

Now uprose the youngest and plumpest girl present, shyly drawing out a crumpled handkerchief. The little cripple in bed chirruped with delight, fumbling under his pillow for another handkerchief to offer José.

'They dance best when some *chicha* has been drunk and they are all a little tipsy,' whispered my friend. 'You should see how excited they grow then, and how all the company keep time with their hands in a clap! clap! clap!'

Meanwhile an elderly sister was tuning a harp of no mean size carried in from the bedroom. The third sister accompanied her with a guitar. These are the national instruments, and Mrs. C. murmured to me that she and her sisters had learned many airs from their cooks or housemaids, who could often play very fairly by ear, though constantly changing both the notes and words of their songs. The harpist now twanged a plaintive tune, and José and his partner 'took the floor,' as the Irish say. The man waved his white ensign over his head and began footing it bravely, while the girl ambled in a sidelong shuffle, and was coy in the use of her kerchief. This was correct, for, no matter with what

excitement of steps and gesture the *cueca* is danced, the man should look serious, the damsel demure. An accompaniment of chanting and hand-clapping arose from the few bystanders, and the dance was certainly pretty, some of José's steps being fairly elaborate, and the abrupt alternations of wooing—eagerness, shyness, flight, and conquest—well expressed by the play of handkerchiefs.

The *cueca* ended, we perforce sipped at glasses of apple-*chicha* handed around, while the granny took another gulp straight from her black bottle. Then followed a song with guitar accompaniment, the eldest sister crooning a kind of echo to the singer, for the Chilians seldom sing alone. It was a love-song, of which the only two lines I caught signified :

‘Your arms drop dead for love of me,
And my heart escapes from my body,
All for love of thee.’

After we left, with many hand-shakings all round, and shoulder-pattings from the granny, Mrs. C. told me of another and very favourite *cueca* song, which begins :

‘A little bird sat on a tree ;
Half-dead of love he seemed to be.’

We crossed the road to visit a second but empty country-house, also belonging to my friend. Picking our way through tangled rose-bushes and shrubs, she bade me peep through the windows to see the ceiling still riddled with bullets since the day of

Plasilla, and two round holes that had been drilled by shells. Then, strolling homeward, I was shown the charming wood and pretty brook behind the house. We searched among the sage-bushes and myrtle and a plant like white heath for the grave of some soldiers found dead on the hillside after the great battle. Only a reddish earth-patch, two sticks tied crosswise, and a faded wreath.

‘On All Souls’ Day I always bring flowers here, and dress their grave, as is the custom of the country,’ said my hostess.

One of the schoolboys was heard calling us just then, having caught a wounded humming-bird. He was hoping to nurse it well ; but the tiny sprite died in his hands, so he stuffed it for me as a keepsake—a dark-green bird, with a golden-red patch on its head. Anita, his young sister, gave me a humming-bird’s nest, like a ball of wool and thistledown.

‘There are plenty in the bushes round,’ she told me. ‘Once I found one all made of the ravellings of my new dress, which I had been sewing outside in the wood.’

The winter afternoon was now shortening, so we started homeward, carrying great bunches of maiden-hair which the boys had gathered in the crannies of the brook, which was overhung with willows and blue-gum. On the way back, Mrs. C. told me instances of the ignorance of her servants, whom she had often taught to write and read ; one nurse

used to repeat a perfectly senseless gabble for the Paternoster.

‘Our country schools need improving,’ said my hostess; ‘but, after all, these poor people are no worse than a Sunday-school child at home, whom I once heard repeating that part of the Belief about Pontius Pilate as “*He sat down under a bunch of spiders!*”’ (Suffered under Pontius Pilate).

Have I already said that the *only* holidays for the working English here are Sundays and the Spanish feast-days? The latter, roughly speaking, are one *fiesta* a month, three holidays at Easter, and, above all, the famous week of the *Diez y Ocho*, or eighteenth of September, the anniversary of the liberation of Chili, when the park in Santiago is crowded with carriages—‘just like the Row in London,’ declared several narrators enthusiastically. Many Chilian families live economically for months, in order to make the braver display in the capital at this festal time. Hotels, theatres, streets, are crowded with holiday folk in gay attire; *peones*, *huasos*, small proprietors, deputies, senators, and, above all, the great Chilian gentry.

On May Day, and the winter *fiestas* following, weather and ground permitting, the Valparaiso Paper-chase Club have a splendid gallop. Then an early train is full of forty to sixty riders and their horses bound for some favourite meet in a country of big fields, high gates, and deep ditches.

The Corpus Christi procession on May 26 was a pretty sight, though small-pox was so rife in the town, where freshly-pitted faces met one at every turn, that we would not mingle with the crowd, so my hostess and I looked down from our hill terrace. Crimson arches and white and pink shrines adorned the Intendencia Plaza. Then with military music appeared a long row of candle and banner bearers, defiling past Lord Cochrane's statue, while holy emblems were borne aloft by priests or crimson-robed boys. Troops of children and young girls, dressed in white muslin and long veils, followed these, singing. Lastly came the Host, carried by the Bishop under a baldaquin, surrounded by priests in gorgeous vestments, and followed by another military band and a regiment or two. As the Host paused to visit each temporary shrine, the acolytes faced round, swinging their incense smoke in a soft haze over the varied scene ; candles twinkled in the daylight ; and the kneeling maidens chanted one of the lovely Latin hymns composed by St. Thomas Aquinas six centuries ago. For the Corpus Christi (or *Fête Dieu*) was instituted by Urban IV., who commanded St. Thomas Aquinas to consider well how a feast-day of love and mercy could best be celebrated. After some days of seclusion and prayer, the present beautiful service, justly called an ornament to the breviary, was humbly brought by the saint to his Pontiff.

On summer feast-days, picnic rides are got up

by the English, their direction sadly limited by the surrounding hills. Riding up these heights is an arduous mountain climb over deep cracks (rain fissures) and around gullies.

But it is a real pleasure to praise the bridle-road to Plasilla, whither I rode with some friends another day. A sudden heat-wave had followed three weeks of raw cold that at nights often chilled one to the marrow ; now we felt too warm on crossing the hill-crest, behind which lay red ridges, scrub-grown, and grazed by a few donkeys. The path wound by innumerable curves of *quebradas*, all of which had their histories. Below this one was the famous reservoir which burst one early morning, sweeping down tons of earth, wretched shanties and their dwellers, trees, gardens and animals, in a mixed horrible flood into the town far below.

My friend, Mr. N., narrowly escaped being caught in this as he was riding on the *camino cintura*, but galloped into Valparaiso to give warning and begin the work of rescue. The wreckage in the town was terrible, and for weeks afterwards bands of Chilian and foreign volunteers were still busily digging the mud out of the streets, and disinterring some eighty bodies. Perhaps there were many more victims, for there is a large number of vagabonds in Chili, any of whom, if missed, are simply supposed dead. The Chilians are very good not only to their own poor, but also to all foreign beggars, such as English run-

away sailors (called beach-combers), who become highway idlers, living on the compassion of the *peones* till they die of drink or disease and are buried by the English Benevolent Society.

Here another deep gully recalled the joke of an English merchant's clerk, newly arrived, who had not yet learned to ride. Galloping round this very bend, he shot off, and was buried in the bushes, causing, as the Spanish papers would phrase it, 'his humanity' (*su humanidad*) 'to make acquaintance with the earth.'

Farther on, in the heart of the hills, there were lovely views at last—peeps of brilliantly blue sea framed in dark green. At times we cantered, but when the road was greatly broken, my steed, an aged hired gray, paced along with a quick tittuping gait, outstripping my companions' partly English-bred horses. This was not the famous Peruvian 'pacing'; in Peru horses ought even never to gallop. But a true Chilian horse, though able to canter all day without tiring, is generally ridden on long journeys at this ambling pace, often overtaking some *gringo* who, hare-like, thought he had left the tortoise far behind hours ago.

Presently we drew rein in the high air of the battlefield. Here (he will forgive a smile) the gentleman who had kindly got up the party for my instruction in the famous tactics of Plasilla drew suspiciously aside. It was another who took up

his parable, describing graphically how he had ridden out here at four o'clock on that gray August morning with other Englishmen, bringing succour to the wounded, who lay around thick as a human harvest. Into these details my mind entered with all sympathy, but what did I know of military strategy? Of how the German Colonel had taught the Opposition troops to skirmish in open order, so that the Government old-style soldiers supposed them a scattered rabble? Of the forced march inland made by the victorious fighters for greater civil freedom? Or how the infantry had crept round yonder foot-hills, and the cavalry charged up the valley?

Verily, on all such points, there is no more ignorant lady alive. So it was with much amusement I afterwards learnt that my entertainer's kindly impulse had been checked by fears of his own incompetence to explain *Plasilla* properly to my supposed critical ears, a terror which was a subject of joke with his friends before our expedition. To tell the truth, my heart had also sunk, fearing he might later expect me to describe the battle in true military correspondent style.

Passing the C.'s house, where we had lately picnicked, and splashing through a brook crossing a wide road, we stopped at a *posada* in the valley hamlet. How different from an English inn! Knocking with riding-crops at a crazy wooden door in a wall, we ducked heads and rode into a disorderly yard. Its

surrounding sheds much resembled each other, whether stables or dwelling-rooms. But the guest-parlour, opening on a long mud-floored porch, was quite comfortable. It boasted well-stuffed green sofas, a big table covered with oilcloth, a cheap piano adorned with empty shells from the battle-field, while Spanish fans and danseuses in tissue-paper enlivened the walls. Refreshments were brought in—native Limache beer, which is said to be excellent, for our men friends, and tea without milk for my girl companion and myself. Also there was *pan blanco*, very hard unleavened rolls, that even a huge pat of butter could not soften.

As we started homewards, two tipsy *huasos* passed us at full gallop, in clouds of dust, working their arms like railway-signals, one almost brushing me, so that I dreaded a blow from his heavy wooden stirrup. They rode full dash to the *rancho* where I had lately seen the *cueca* danced, and at the wooden *barra* their clever nags turned round sharp, stopping dead. This is a common trick taught the Chilian horses, which are 'as wise as men,' so all the English say in warm praise of these tireless, good-tempered, wonderfully trained animals. Half an hour after, the same *huasos* tore past us again, quarrelling loudly after their late glasses of *chicha*, and a mile farther dashed up to a second *rancho* and its *barra*, never slackening speed till they brought up short. These Chilian peasants certainly ride like centaurs.

One English acquaintance assured me that *huasos* will gallop at a wall till the horses graze it with their fore-feet, and yet wheel without falling.

The low sun blazed blinding in our eyes as we cantered homewards over the level hill-top. A sharp cry of 'Ware mud!' from my riding companion startled me just in time to swerve slightly from a single muddy patch in the broad track. What danger lay in that?

'It must be a deep mud-hole to be wet at all when the rest of the road is as dry as dust,' came in anxious explanation. 'I was terribly afraid your horse might sink up to his girths.'

Presently, when the sun set, as we dipped among the bosky hills, the sky showed a more exquisite variety of colours than I have seen anywhere else in the world. Imagine a brilliant three-quarter moon rising behind as we rode over the last dark-green and blood-red hued hill. Straight overhead the sky was intensely blue, shading lower down into a wonderful heliotrope, then a pale blue, turning to green, and next—oh! next was a lovely yellow, dying in a faint rosy line, level with the ring of shimmering gray sea. And right on this blue and yellow horizon, in wonderful contrast, there glowed one cloud like a crimson banner hung out in honour of the sun-god which had dipped below out of sight. Then the moonlight grew sharper, the shadows blacker, and lights twinkled in Valparaiso town, and from the

ships in harbour, glowing brighter and multiplying as we rode into the town over the rough causeways, and down the dusty, steep streets.

'Are these, then, the only holidays that you have in Chili? You all work much harder here than in England,' I remarked to a lad freshly come from an English public school.

'Harder work; but then we have the riding to make up for it,' said the boy cheerily. 'Still, we do get an extra holiday now and again for cross-country races. Only those beastly Germans are so keen on every halfpenny! If we send round the offices asking for a general holiday, the English always gladly say "Yes." Ten to one the German houses refuse to agree, thinking they see a chance of getting the better of the English for that day.'

One hears complaints everywhere that the German commerce is cutting out the English. Some wise heads told me this is because of the cheaper goods imported by the Teuton. Take, for instance, an English kettle, which, though dear, will outlast three German ones. The latter are worthless but cheap, so the Chilians buy them without reflection. Dark hints also are whispered as to custom-house officials being bribed to let in German goods lightly. Of this I know nothing certain, but where there is so much smoke there may be fire.

A feast-day in another sense was given me by Mrs. C., the same kind friend of our picnic to Plasilla.

‘Come to lunch—the children’s dinner, you know—and you shall have only real Chili dishes. Afterwards you can all ride over to Laguna.’

So one day, warm as winter on the Riviera, I rang at a wooden door in the street wall, and, going up some brick steps, approached what seemed two sides of a greenhouse with a low house-roof beyond. This describes many old-fashioned houses here where the encircling veranda has been glassed over to make a passage apartment. It was indeed a feast of fat things to which I was bidden. First came a *cazuela*—most favourite of Chilian dishes—made of chickens boiled down in soup thickened with peas, rice, and potatoes. Next *empanadas*, or squares of thick paste filled with meat, gravy, and a suspicion of onion—excellent. Then *papas reinas*, which are rissoles of meat rolled in potatoes and fried. More potatoes followed, such as the peasants eat alone for their mid-day breakfast; these were swimming in a clear, appetizing gravy, likewise much flavoured with onion.

What a cheery family party it was, the small boys all ravenous and chattering at the top of their voices! ‘*They* are cormorants,’ remarked their younger sister scornfully. Presently came *postres*, or puddings. Chili cheese also, strong-flavoured, but somewhat melting; besides *dulces*, such as preserved yams, or sweet potatoes.

Ting-a-ting, ting! In the midst of the feast the

telephone kept constantly ringing with messages from the town, to which the elder boy sprang up to reply, with answering calls of 'Hillo, hillo!' *They* now loudly clamoured for cups of hot maté, as it was a real Chili dinner, and they ran to borrow tin *bombillas* from the servants; but Anita, their sister, sipped hers through a beautiful old tube of native straw, exquisitely plaited and dyed in a pattern.

'See how trade is spoiling the country industries,' remarked Mrs. C., who, like myself, did not thirst for the hot Jesuits' tea, else we should have imbibed ours out of silver cups through silver *bombillas*. 'What a pity that the servants buy these horrid trashy Birmingham things the boys have got hold of! They turn green if not cleaned, and the yerba fibre gets into them.'

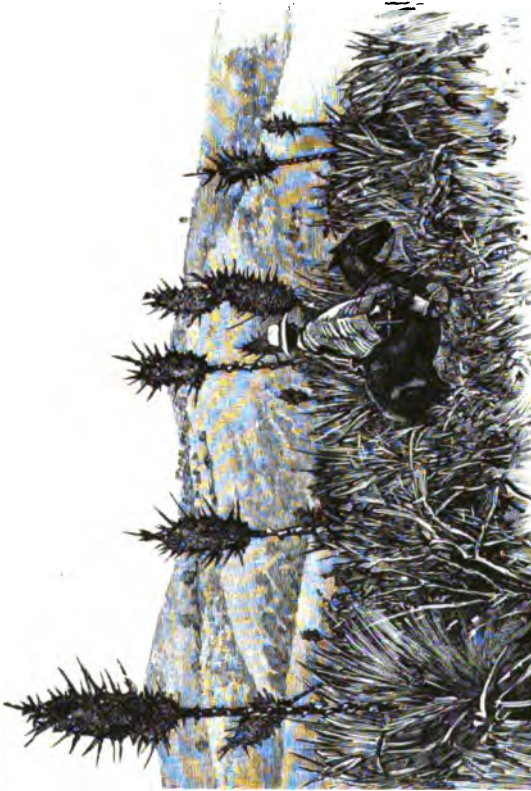
Our ride in the evening has left as pleasant a recollection in my mind as the lunch. I was lent one of the boys' horses. Anita galloped ahead with her hair streaming; her pony Chico (Little One) and she seeming part of each other.

Laguna is a bay, or rather lagoon, south of Valparaiso, and after two miles of riding over the hills, the scenery became the prettiest I have yet seen here. For long stretches we had a fairly level road of hard red earth, skirted by grass, though cracks and rain-fissures, as usual, were to be avoided. On the wayside we looked into a miserable *rancho*, on the pretext of buying eggs. It was a single room

of adobe or mud, rush-thatched, and the door hung on thong hinges. An old crone allowed me to peep from my saddle at the mud-floored interior, with its rags, squalor, and wretched pallet, that had, however, a tidy counterpane. She was as pleased as any old Irishwoman to get some pleasant words and a few pence. Plenty of fowls clucked about the bare road, while six donkeys grazed among the bushes. Most of the poor beasts had terrible sores on their sides, probably from carrying bags of bricks without proper padding. One frequently sees a string of sixteen in the town thus heavily loaded wherever building is going on.

At last, after descending a hill with a splendid sea-view, came the Quebrada Verde, or Green Ravine. Here was a lonely country house with splendid mimosa-trees overhanging the road. Anita gathered some of the yellow 'aromo' blossom that filled the air with fragrance, whereupon two crawling brown babies at the gate instantly called with indignation on 'Mamita!' (little mother), so we rode away from their wrath. More hills, more blue sea-peeps, with brushwood covering the lonely hills for miles and miles; then the road overhung the precipice, with the lagoon lying far below. This was the out-flow of a stream banked by sand from the sea, that rolled into the bay with a long, low roar. On the cliffs overhead grew strange-looking plants, like dead aloe-sticks, ten feet high, with mops'-heads outlined

against the sky. These were *chajuals*, a kind of agave, among the rare flowers Miss Marianne North came to Chili to paint. A little later and their newly-sprouted sticks would blossom with



CHAJUAL PLANTS ; PEASANT RIDING.

spikes of yellow-greenish flowers. But I could not stay for the spring-time.

As we stopped, breathing our horses, a bird on an opposite hill sang 'Tio-tio-Autin' (this is sup-

posed to mean 'Uncle, Uncle Augustin'). Another bird, the 'long-tail,' builds a nest like an inverted sugar-loaf, into which the hen dives, sitting with her caudal finery snugly upright.

We dallied till late on the way, so cantered home in the twilight that soon turned to darkness. At the top of the Calle Hospital, where the street is like a mountain-side, our horses nearly stumbled over a drove of asses sleeping soundly, poor beasts! on the smooth-worn rocks in the middle of the road.

SANTIAGO, OR THE CITY OF ST. JAMES.

ALTHOUGH I had been invited to stay at the British Legation in Santiago immediately on my arrival in Chili, from one cause or another my visit thither was delayed till the lingering heat of April had given place to May, with its expected winter.

So one early morning my friends, the Wetheralls, and I, scrambled down the long flight of steps from our hill in haste to catch the 7.30 express. The luggage followed on porters' backs. Then, with much bell-ringing of the engine, our train went through the town without killing anyone at the street-crossings.

What a lovely morning it was, fresh, but almost too warm as the sunlight streamed into the luxurious Pullman-car! Away past the Valparaiso Bay and pretty Viña; then inland up a bosky valley, and out of the hills into the open vine-country.

Beyond Limache was a rich land, well watered, and its fields divided by long lines of giant weeping-willows, like green cascades, that had a pleasingly

pendent effect new to my eye. Elsewhere were grand golden rows of autumn-tinted poplars ; while for miles a thicket of blackberry bramble bordered the railway line, so deep that even a Chilian waggon and team of oxen might have been hidden in its luxuriance. Many of these great osier-sided carts, filled with mountains of green pumpkins, we saw, slowly being dragged past comfortable brown farms, set in walnut orchards, their adobe walls always reminding me of Devonshire 'cob.'

The scene presently changed. Our train rushed among mountains, and began to climb more slowly up a wild and rocky valley across giddy bridges and round sharp curves overhanging deep precipices. The scenery is very fine—even grand at parts—especially heightened in its terrors to timid womanly minds by a knowledge of the dangers of this line. We passed a chasm where very lately a terrible disaster, with great loss of life, occurred ; when two spare engines, rushing down by their own weight, crashed into a passenger train, despatched only a short time before, and that was stopped by an accident to its brake. What between swollen rivers and frail bridges, besides ineffective gear, it is not too much to say that railway-travelling in Chili is a real risk. On the best authority I was told that 'sixty-two first-class accidents' happened in the preceding year, and the English engine-drivers complained bitterly of worn-out brakes, to say nothing of easy-

going Chilian pointsmen who think it a trifling matter to go to sleep on duty.

Having crossed the highest ridge, our train descended into the wide plain of Santiago, dotted with small, solitary hills, and surrounded by the magnificent range of the Andes, now bathed in a rosy heat-haze. Then came a large and busy station, and oh, joy! level streets again, and a wide *alameda*. Handsome town-houses belonging to the great Chilian families bordered this on either side, some fanciful, especially one that was like a blue and white mosque surmounted by a large dome. Then, about half-past twelve, we arrived at the British Legation, in the Calle Bandera, and felt it was almost European to mount a staircase once more to a first-floor flat, and see houses on either side with two, or even three, stories.

After lunch and a rest, our host took us out in the afternoon, and as in duty bound—in the opinion of all dwellers in this picturesque town of Santiago—led me first to see the famous view from Santa Lucia.

Santa Lucia is a high rock, rising abruptly in the midst of the town, and was the first stronghold of the Spaniards, when Valdivia conquered the country with a handful of men, until southward the Araucarian Indians arrested his progress. Later on, it became infested by rascals, and there was even talk of blowing it up, when a citizen conceived the happy

idea of turning it into an ornamental garden. We praised this public benefactor, Vicuña Mackenna (whose name, like many others of present importance in Chili, signifies descent from an Irish herd or mechanic), as we turned from the streets into the gates of the rock-garden. This much resembled the Château at Nice, only it was more steep. Encircling roads rose gently, shaded by pepper-trees and palms, while cacti, prickly pears, and geraniums ran wild, the peeps of town and plain growing ever prettier, till, passing a fashionable restaurant for little dinners and *banquetes*, besides a chapel and open-air theatre, a flight of steep steps reaches the summit.

Here was the *mirador*, or view-point. A glorious view indeed!—for Santiago lay like a map below us. Farther spread the plain fringed by hills; but eastward the Andes rose in height beyond height and sierra above sierra to the far white peaks everlastingly snow-capped. Looking down at the long *alameda*, which forms a straight line of trees for three miles through the town, I exclaimed, ‘It looks like a green river.’

‘It *was* a river,’ said Mr. Kennedy, who had accompanied us from the Legation. ‘The water has been dammed higher up under the hills, and diverted for the use of the town; but you see the original bed, and what a splendid street it makes!’

I was astonished to find what a large area Santiago covers; but this is because of the house

patios chequering it everywhere in tiny green squares, as seen from our eyrie eminence. These palm-shaded inner courts betray pleasant leafy glimpses as one strolls by open doors down the sunny, dusty street. There are few *altos*, or upper floors, except in the principal quarters, so that a city of equal size in Europe or the States would hold three times the population of Santiago. Also some of the houses of the great families are widely spread.

‘Two of these, if fine, will sometimes occupy a whole *cuadra*, or block,’ said the Minister. And he took me in to see one mansion, belonging to friends, that was much like a handsome Paris house, with its courtyard and richly-furnished rooms ; though the great wooden doors were additionally strengthened by spy-holes and heavy protecting gates, doubtless most useful during the late civil war.

My next morning’s impression of the town was equally charming. We visitors hurried out early by ourselves, our host’s duties necessarily occupying his forenoon—to our regret. The sunny streets were very noisy, but, then, so full of life and colour. Here we passed the fine building of the Congress Houses,* and then turned off to the great square, the Plaza de Armos, and its big, if uninteresting, cathedral—folk must not be fastidious as to architecture in South America. On one side a shady arcade reminded one of Spain, filled as it was with

* These have since been, unfortunately, burnt.

booths, where birds, stationery, vegetables, and cravats were in succession pressed upon us by eager vendors. And from this arcade branched imposing glass passages with large, almost Parisian, shops (their goods, indeed, come each season from Europe), all showing that in fashion, as in almost everything else, Chili leads the van in the southern continent. Down by the river-bed the vegetable market was a characteristic sight, although its former attraction—the old bridge, studded by stone sentry-boxes—has, alas! been ‘improved’ away.

Hundreds of huge osier-waggons filled the market-place, their oxen herded together in horned groups, and their disgorged contents of onions and melons or pumpkins piled on the ground, guarded by squatting half-Indian women, cooking the men’s breakfasts over little brasiers, or selling cakes.

Many other sights there were for other days. One afternoon we went by tram to the Quinta Normal, our party joined by two Englishmen travelling for pleasure. Here was a fine museum of agriculture set in a public garden. And beyond gleaming ponds and great willows were the yards of a small ‘Zoo,’ where the pretty native vicuñas and the slightly bigger guanacoës that can still be stalked in the Andes—though rare and shy as chamois—could be compared. Beside these were coarse-haired alpacas and big llamas. But the latter graceful and useful beasts of burden should be seen

free, and in Peru. There how proudly a drove come stepping along, following their leader, who wears a knowing red cap on his head, each llama carrying a pack of just the weight he feels suited to his strength! An ounce more and he lies down, when no force, coaxing, or cruelty will make him budge.

Another day a neighbour, one of the very few English residents, took me out in a smart dogcart, driving a pair of ponies tandem. We nearly ran over some Santiago *flâneurs*, who did not hear the light vehicle, what with the ear-splitting din of tramcars and waggons continually passing on the paved streets. Luckily escaping the leader's likely entanglement in various teams of oxen, we reached safety in the beautiful park. Here was a great central circle, the Campo de Marzo, ringed by a fine drive and a wood intersected by shady walks, ornamental water, and gardens. The scene was framed by fine hills of a rosy violet tinge in the evening light that showed sweetly against the extremely clear blue of the sky.

Next, bumping over a road like a switchback railway, we drove to the excellent racecourse, which proved once more that the Chilians can justly be called the 'English of South America,' if only from their love of sport. The new stand was itself a thing of beauty, ended by its two towers with peaked roofs; while the view of mountains

beyond a foreground of autumn-tinted trees and meadow lingers pleasingly in my memory.

I was very grateful to my host for kindly introducing me during my stay to some of the great Chilian families, which enabled me to gain a more correct impression of the manner of life among the best-born Chilian ladies than I could otherwise easily have gleaned. The old Spanish tradition prevails among them of distaste to mingling in society with the foreigners in their country, who are necessarily almost all employed in some kind of trade. To diplomats or travellers, however, they will extend a warm hospitality.

Many stories had been showered upon me of the middle-class Chilian women, belonging to the smaller gentry, the merchant, and the shopkeeper grades—of their devotion in religion, their goodness as wives and mothers, but also of their grave failings in British eyes; their love of laziness, and shortcomings as to tidiness and tubbing. All which latter denote simply a Spanish strain and a backwardness of education such as probably prevailed even in England a little over a century ago. Some of these tales were amusing, if not kind.

One concerned a friend of mine who was invited to stay for a *rodeo* at a large country *hacienda*. The host was British by birth, but the son of a Chilena, and married to another. He showed his guest into a bedroom on the ground-floor, long unused, a blade

or two of grass pushing through the brick pavement, the walls damp.

‘My dear fellow, could you not give me a room in your *alto*?’ expostulated the dismayed visitor. ‘I am subject to chills.’

‘I am very sorry,’ returned the host, ‘but my wife hates the trouble herself of going upstairs, *so won’t ask her servants to do so.*’

After another *rodeo*, several of the country proprietors present sat down to dinner, their *ponchos* still smothered in dust, and their unwashed hands begrimed.

In winter afternoons it is to be regretted that many town ladies, if surprised by a visitor when it is not their day for receiving, may appear looking warm and suspiciously sleepy. When taxed, they will prettily confess: ‘Well, yes, I have been in bed, but in this cold weather there is nothing else to do.’ Of a lower class, instances were told me of the daughters in a lodging-house rising late and proceeding to the housework unwashed, with loose torn gowns pulled over their night attire. Towards evening they would dress their hair and put on smart clothes.

Society parties mostly consist of evening visits paid in a clannish kind of way, or great *banquetes*, with twelve courses at least. But this applies to Santiago, where there is hardly any foreign element. At Valparaiso, British and Germans have so inter-

married with Chilians that the Chilenas are often only distinguishable from their European sisters by their sweeter and more caressing manners. Going to church daily, sometimes twice, seemed to be the chief occupation or distraction of most ladies in the capital. At certain hours they thronged the streets, taller, stronger than the Argentine or Peruvian women, looking almost severe in their correct church garb of black dress and *manto*, with humbly gloveless hands covered with rings; their complexions lovely, but their type of feature sometimes heavy. It is remarkable that while the corruption of morals in Chili among the men, not excepting the priests, is proverbial, and said to be even worse than in the Argentine, never did I hear one word of reproach breathed against the conduct of the gentle Chilenas by even their worst detractors. Almost all ladies I met were excellent musicians, good linguists, and often fond of painting, but as yet more given to imitation than originality.

And now for a brief description of some great country houses in the neighbourhood of Santiago. One sunny day Mr. Kennedy drove us out of the gay but noisy streets up the long green *alameda* with its rushing *acequia*, and its noble white statues of Chilian heroes, such as O'Higgins, the Irish General (pronounced O'Eechens), into the open country. Dust lay deep on the roads, smothering the adobe walls of the dry fields and the mud huts

thatched with bulrushes. But a swift canal, fed from the snows of the near Andes, foamed on one side, thick-edged with wild-cane. Soon came pink-walled farms comfortably roofed with tiles; their large orchards, and farmyards where stood fat oxen, all showing signs of plenty. But even in the meanest hovels were glimpses of melons and pumpkins lavishly piled on the floors; of scarlet *chilis* drying in the sun. The children who ran out from these homes were all fat and well clothed. There are really very few poor folk in Chili. The climate is temperate, and some grapes, bread, and oranges suffice them for a meal. But the conditions of life are unsuited to British immigrants, so I learned on the best authority.

Presently, skirting a long adobe wall, we turned into the *quinta* of Nuñoa, belonging to the Ossa family. Beyond a ring of grass, a fountain, and shrubberies, stood the three-storied mansion, raised on a stone terrace, and not unlike a French château. The family had just migrated to their handsome town-house in Santiago for the winter, but Don Luis, or, as we should say, Mr. Ossa, was awaiting us to play host, having driven out here for the day.

First he showed us the pleasure-grounds behind the house, studded with palms and flowering shrubs; then many hothouses full of glorious tropical plants and orchids—these last sent out from England by Veitch. Passing through a trellised walk, hung

with late grapes, we found a herd of fine English sheep browsing in a walnut orchard. 'The ram cost a fortune,' said our host, smiling. Further on was a pleasant view of woodland embosoming a pretty pond. It seemed strange to be crunching dead leaves ankle-deep underfoot while the sun was roasting hot. Winter this May had delayed so long that the thermometer still marked 80° in the shade, and no snow lay yet on the near mountains, save on one towering peak.

On returning to the house, the wide marble central hall felt like an ice-cave after the sunshine outside. This hall and the handsome drawing-room boasted some good Italian statues and pictures, tables of *rosso antico* and jasper, besides bronzes. Some lofty bedrooms on the ground-floor were very richly furnished in French style, with bed-canopies fifteen feet high. But the upper ones, though large, were more simple, even bare to English ideas, as might be necessary in the hot summers here.

We climbed out on the very roof to see the view from the *mirador*. The great Nuñoa vineyards lay outspread, still golden-green after vintage, and reminding us how excellent are several of the Chilian wines when kept some years. And beyond the wide, flat plain, studded with the woods of neighbouring estates, rose the giant Andes, not four miles distant, their steep slopes arid, but softened by a warm, sunlit haze.

On descending, we were offered in turn beer, champagne, and lemonade. And after the last-named refreshment, we found our carriage in the yard in the company of some fifty ploughs. Don Luis, having sent a *peon* riding to open the gates in his private farm-road, which was a short-cut to the neighbouring estate, that of the Cousins', we took our leave, only sorry that this day we could not meet our host's pretty wife. A month later I had this pleasure at some cross-country races, where she kindly drove me and a friend about in her carriage, on first meeting. But then, as she flatteringly said, some of my novels had been for several years her boudoir friends. Doña Emilianita herself, though one of the loveliest of society butterflies, was then busily translating an article on Chili in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* into Spanish for newspaper publication. And though only having visited England once, for her honeymoon, she spoke English charmingly. Her husband, like many Chilians of good family, had been educated at Stonyhurst, and patronized London tailors no less than English breeders of prize stock.

Our next visit was to Macul, belonging to Señora Cousiño, supposed to be the richest woman in the world. Her lovely country-place, near Concepcion in the South, is mentioned by the late Miss North in that lady's travels; also the Santiago town-house, a dream of luxury, in which the drawing-room silken

curtains are alone said to have cost £3,000. After driving up an avenue a mile long, we found the great gates locked, so perforce skirted the demesne adobe wall, shaded by noble trees, for a considerable distance. This showed me a curious sight.

On great estates, such as this one of many square miles, it is customary to house and feed all the very many *peones* employed. The single men live in a kind of large barrack under a steward's eye. The married are given cottages, when it becomes their interest to safeguard the lands of their master. Thus here, beyond an open ditch and screen of bulrushes, was one of these labourers' villages. The almost Indian mud and wattle huts were scattered among trees and thick scrub ; pigs, babies, fowls and cats straying promiscuously among the bushes and cane-brakes. It was most picturesque, if a trifle uncivilized.

No family house was ever built at Macul, though the demesne is enormous ; the owner herself lives in Paris. Passing large stables, we therefore stopped at the small house of the English *administrador*. This latter post is one often given to our countrymen—a responsible position, considering the large herds of cattle and sheep, and the troops of horses, on a great *hacienda*. One lady told me she had lost two prize English horses and quite a large number of cows one year, stolen by dishonest Chilian herdsmen.

Mr. Kennedy was warmly welcomed as usual by

a group of Chilian gentlemen at the door, among whom was a son of the Señora Cousiño. We ladies were carried off by as many Chilenas to a sit-down tea (the strongest and blackest beverage imaginable), and found ourselves regaling on buns and quince jam, and embarking bravely in a sea of Spanish.

But we were soon hurried away, for the afternoon was waning, and the neighbouring proprietor of a third great estate had driven hither purposely to meet and bring us to his *hacienda*. He was Señor Guillermo Errazuriz (since, alas! dead), one of the most courteous and kindly specimens of a highbred Chilian gentleman, who, as an admiring English friend of his—no mean judge—said, had all the gifts of fortune man could wish, excepting health.

Being invited to the box-seat of his waggonette, I was driven by Don Guillermo along a country lane, edged perilously by a rushing canal from the snow-hills. Round sharp corners, by broken places, we sped, the strong native cobs sending a shower of small gravel and dust in our faces, as if it were summer, when the high Chilian winds are annoying. My guide meanwhile explained to me the necessary system of irrigation here, the 'best in the world,' and how all the dry plain around was watered from this same canal. His lucerne, or *alfalfa*, fields had thus given three crops last summer and would now be grazed in winter, equalling, he said, five crops. In speaking, the señor's English accent was so

excellent that I almost mistook him for a fellow-countryman ; then I learnt he had been at an English public school for several years. Soon came a bridge of unguarded planks laid across the water, some boards wanting, for carpenters were mending it ; but the horses rattled over bravely. So we entered the farm gate of Hermida.

By the large farm buildings Señor Errazuriz drew up to show me his lucerne hay, pressed for export. And just then along the wooded lane came a long string of thoroughbred racehorses, returning from exercise, with an English trainer following on a Chilian pony. They were the pride of Señor Errazuriz's heart, and he eagerly brought us into the wide yard surrounded by boxes, ordered chairs for the ladies, and all the beauties were trotted past. About five-and-twenty two-year-olds came first, winners every one, though in Chili they are allowed to be raced once only at this age. Then came some more older horses, all of pure English breed, one chestnut never yet beaten in Chili, and two prize stallions, lately imported from England. A prize Suffolk Punch was the only low-born animal we saw.

Pity there was no time to see the famous Hermida short-horns, 200 milch cows ! Nor the brood mares and foals ; nor the English sheep.

Leaving the horses lingeringly, we visited the fine new house of Hermida, approached by horseshoe steps leading to a high stone terrace where two big

boar-hounds gambolled. Beyond a small outer hall, we entered a splendid inner one, all wainscoted in beautiful dark-red Chilian wood, looking like any ancestral hall in old England, what with its noble stone fireplaces and the stained-glass window on one side. But, opposite, glass-doors gave a view of orange-trees surrounding the gravelled *patio*, noble palms beyond in the pleasure-grounds, and—startlingly near—the glorious mountains. One could see here and there a *rancho* clinging to their lower slopes, while higher came bare great sweeps of warmly brownish colour, and above on the topmost heights rosy sunset lingered, with the occasional gleam of a far, pure snow-peak.

In the family wing, enclosing the *patio* on the left, Doña Blanca Errazuriz and two of her children were suffering from a slight attack of measles. But a few weeks later I met this very handsome Chilian lady, whose Titianesque hair and complexion of milk and roses reminded one of Devonshire rather than of the Pacific coast.

We were shown the opposite visitors' wing, on the right, its many bedrooms ending in a chapel with some good Italian pictures and a fine triptych. Here Mass is held for the household servants and farm *peones*, the *prie-dieux* of the family being placed in the ante-room.

Returning to the reception-rooms, my attention was specially called to a fine library, fairly well filled,

'though still too new,' as our host remarked. A large drawing-room boasted two grand Murillos and also an Andrea del Sarto on the walls, for, as Señor Errazuriz told us, his father was fortunate enough to visit Italy at a time when the monks in many monasteries were selling their treasures. But the dining-room was hung with landscapes by modern British artists.

And now the dusk was settling down softly over the plain, and a long drive lay before us. So, refusing the usual Chilian hospitable offer of champagne, we said good-bye. The horses cantered homewards (forgetting that trotting were better manners) and we whirled along the twilight dust-laden roads, by giant poplars, the finest I ever saw, and by *ranchos* where supper was cooking, while an orange sunset overspread the sky.

Next day we left, our regret being only lessened when at the wayside stations some semi-Indian peasants offered us through the train windows partridges, wood-pigeons and baskets of grapes, figs and pears—all which country delicacies Mr. Wetherall gleefully bought like a provident house-keeper.

When next I had the pleasure of revisiting Santiago, the August snows powdered the Cordilleras in shining whiteness, the beauty of the scene being only equalled by that of the Pyrenees as seen from Pau. This time my visit was to the K.'s, the next-

door neighbours and friends of Mr. Kennedy, who joined our circle, or we his, most evenings. On some of these a party of eight, clothed in evening dress and their right minds, might have been seen seated round a table where stood a round disc, all holding telephone receivers to their ears in silence. Which meant that the opera was being performed ; and this was the fashionable way of listening to the singing when disinclined to go out.

One exciting day a Chilian lady, whose letters were published in the *Times* during the civil war, called and carried me off to hear *the* great debate of the day in Congress. Should amnesty be extended to *all* those who took part in the late civil war?—yea or nay? The *Stes* were raining from the crowded Liberal benches as the President called the names for voting, while *No!* was yelled by three solitary Conservatives. Then a storm of hisses and cries burst from the galleries above—the President's bell rang on and on for order, and loud *Vivandos* surged up from an anxious mob in the halls below.

Now, though it is two years since the war, small wonder that blood still boiled and many hearts were bitter, for the crux of the matter lay in this—*Were the Lo Caños murderers to be forgiven?*

To my mind Lo Caños was the saddest episode of the fratricidal struggle, when families were torn asunder—some fighting for established laws, others for fuller liberties. The old wineskins which had

served since Chili threw off the yoke of Spain were rent by the fermenting vintage of new thought and strivings towards ideal progress. As to the story of Lo Caños, it is as follows :

During the civil war, Balmaceda heard that a plot was on foot to seize the southern railway, cut the wires, and stop his troops. A number of boys of the best Santiago families had been incited to attempt the deed, the eldest being barely twenty, the youngest not fifteen. They stole out to the tryst, the small farmhouse of Lo Caños, five miles from Santiago. There they were surprised by a detachment of President Balmaceda's soldiers, who set fire to the dwelling, and as the lads rushed out they were butchered, and either thrown back into the flames or horribly mutilated. Eight, who probably did not attempt fight, were taken prisoners and marched all the way to town.

Now, whether Balmaceda gave orders, or that his wishes were evilly misinterpreted by his lieutenants, or some one blundered, may never be rightly known. But a few hours later these eight wretched boys were hurried back and shot against the walls of the farm. Later the charred remains of all the victims were brought to Santiago mixed up in sacks, as was related to me by one who went, hoping to identify a corpse, and witnessed the ghastly spectacle. Only two boys somehow escaped. They were helped to hide by some pitying *rotos*, or roughs, in the brush-

wood, and saw the tragedy and their comrades' fate. At last after some weeks they ventured to steal secretly to their homes, hardly recognisable from the terrible shock, and bowed like old men. The gloom cast over Santiago afterwards was great. People skulked about the streets, their looks black with fear and shame, livid from rage.

And now the vote was carried to 'draw a veil over the past,' as one deputy expressed it.

My friend, Doña Anita de J., with her husband and some of his fellow-members, then showed me the two handsome houses and fine marble hall connecting them, where, on June 1, the President in state used to declare Congress open ; also several spacious committee-rooms and a library, where we met and chatted with some Ministers, senators, and deputies.

Next morning these friends drove me round various schools. The public spirit and eagerness for the real good of their country I met with among the well-bred Chilians is remarkable—a striking contrast with the apathy in the neighbouring republics of all but those who are struggling for places and pensions. The great ladies are especially interested and powerful in politics ; the opinions of several being quoted with as much respect as those of leading men, while their salons are the society camps of their parties.

We first visited the Escuela Profesional, a Govern-

ment institute where various professions are taught to girls, free of expense. The low rooms surrounding two courts were buzzing with the chatter of many maids, from sixteen to eighteen years old. One class was for cooking, where we tasted good pumpkin *dulce*, or jam ; others were taught to make dresses, cardboard boxes, artificial flowers, embroidery, hand-painting on fans, etc., also the manufacture of gloves, excellent in cut and kid—a boon here, where one pays so dearly in the shops for those imported from Europe. Above all, book-keeping is the most valued instruction of the school, enabling girls for the first time here to take situations of trust. Besides this, we saw a higher school for teachers, and some other institutions for public good.

My guides were all eager to improve the status of women in Chili. ‘Men respect our sex more now they see that girls can support themselves,’ said the señora, whose zeal for establishing country schools is praised in the late Miss North’s ‘Travels,’ when that accomplished flower-painter stayed with her in Chili.

THE HOME OF THE HUASO.

BESIDES the visits already mentioned, I spent a long and happy one with the N.'s, at their pretty hill-side home in Valparaiso. We went, among other sights, to a Chilian wedding, which took place at eight at night, being followed by a ball and supper of twelve courses. Only the golden rule of brevity forbids my dwelling on this and another visit to my Irish friends, the Y.'s, who took me charming rides by sea-cliffs, and over grassy downs at Viña. All was so interesting. Why do not more English try this trip over the Andes?

But what is there to be seen? people ask. Well, as regards Chili, let us sum up the matter. Besides Santiago and Valparaiso, one can go South and enjoy almost English scenery, rocky rivers and deep woods. Two Chilian ladies described to me enthusiastically a journey they took thither, when at times the forests were so dense they had not seen daylight for miles, and the moss was deep underfoot. One said she had ridden twenty leagues

between Union and Valdivia, when, in the heart of the woods, twelve leagues from anywhere, they came on a lonely wayside hut. This proved to be a wooden shrine, with a cross on the roof, and some candles burning within. On looking closer, they saw a plate laid, containing several five-cent pieces.

'It is the tomb of a miracle-worker,' said their country guide. 'Long ago, when the Spaniards fought here in the last war, an old prisoner they were dragging along died of maltreatment and was buried at this spot. He must have been pious, for somehow his fame as a saint grew; and all herdsmen passing by invoke his aid should they lose a stray beast. He has so often helped them that they built this tomb by degrees (a wooden cabin), and always light candles, and leave money, which is never stolen.'

'Well, that *is* a miracle in this country!' exclaimed her hearers.

It is to be truthfully noted that thieving and lying are the two great faults of the Chilian peasants. Fibbing is considered a polite accomplishment among them—so, at least, I was repeatedly told. And a father will proudly relate the exploits of some youngster in this art, amid shouts of laughter from an admiring audience.

In all this, it should never be lost sight of how largely the native class is mixed with the Indian element. And down South the pure Araucanian

Indian is seen within his own lands, and is interesting enough to repay travellers for the journey to Concepcion, and thence inland. It is his savage virtues that are the sinews of the Chilian folk; his ingrained passion for drinking in carouses of days, varied by dancing and improvising songs (as old travellers have described two centuries ago), and his fierce fighting instincts, that are yet the vices of his civilized descendants. And on the whole his is the best Indian stock in all America—indeed, the only one which has created a *nation*; not merely the governing of the *peon* class by the superior caste of Spanish or foreign blood, but a still gradually blending whole, like that formerly of Saxon churl and Norman noble. And this will one day apparently make Chili a power to be reckoned with.

There are at the present day some 50,000 Araucanians left, living together in semi-independence, since twelve years ago the fierce warriors at last made peace with Chili. Their dwellings are great beehive-shaped huts, some twenty or thirty grouped near that of the *cacique*, whose family consists of as many wives as his means allow him to keep in Indian comfort. The men are a handsome, dignified race; many of the women are very pretty in youth. Dressed in dark-blue garments, woven of guanaco wool and dyed by themselves, not unlike the Greek *chiton* and *himation*, they are loaded with silver ornaments of Indian make.

Hospitality is the pride of the *caciques*; and a friend of mine who visited one at Lebu, so poor that he could only afford two wives, was yet offered his best fare after her long ride. This was a large earthenware dish containing a dozen roast spring chickens, and a second tray followed with potatoes. In general the chief's dishes are of solid silver, rudely hammered out.

While speaking of silver-work, I should add that all classes in Chili seem to have equally prized silver household gear, either as a family investment or for the quaint devices of its native workmanship. Money in troubled times was not put in banks, but beaten into solid basins and jugs, door-handles or massive stirrups—in fact, every utensil imaginable, except, perhaps, those for rough kitchen use. When I visited the pawnbrokers, with friends all eager to secure some bargain of a chased *maté* (teapot), useful to hold roses for dinner-table decoration, sacks of great silver dishes and plates were outpoured before us. 'They will be sent to England for bullion,' said the merchant.

Two centuries ago, the few travellers who visited Chili and wrote their impressions—as Catalina, the Spanish nun-soldier; and Frézier, the agreeable spy sent by Louis XIV.—noted the wonderful riding of the Chilian Indians, and the quantity of native horses. 'Although this animal was first introduced by the Spaniards,' says the latter, 'and that the

horseflesh is eaten by the natives, their number is so great that one only costs a few crowns.' In which respect Chili has not changed.

The Araucanian *cacique* is still always mounted when he goes abroad, even to a near hamlet to buy provisions. His wives as invariably follow on foot,



ARAUCANIAN WOMAN.

bearing a sack, a babe, and as many other burdens as he may please. Indeed, the oppressed lives of these patient slaves, the chief workers and weight-carriers for their lazy lords, who like to lie in the sun, rouses one's blood with indignation. But to be just, is not this the transition state of semi-civiliza-

tion? In a savage existence, the Indian man was the hunter and warrior, both pursuits needing constant toil and hardship. The tasks of the sexes were then not unfairly divided; but now he has not yet learned to use spade and axe instead of lance and lasso, so the woman suffers.

The fine horsemanship of the Indian has not degenerated in his half-bred descendant, the *huaso*. And the time to see the latter at his best is at a *rodeo*, or, in English words, the parting of the cattle on a big *hacienda*. This is held as a holiday by all the neighbouring *haciendados*, or farmers; by the *huasos*, or peasants, who can afford a horse; even by the poor *peones*, which, literally translated, means 'pawns,' men of no account.

A great annual *rodeo* is a red-letter day for twenty miles around, and from early dawn the *huasos* may be seen jogging to the scene of pastime. Many will be riding quite poor ponies, but leading each his own animal, carefully prepared and groomed for the great occasion. Now, a *huaso* is still utterly unawakened to the sense of chivalry which stirs even the rough American cowboy, yet some feelings in his breast this morning resemble those with which a good knight used to set out to a tourney. Riding his palfrey, Sir Bedivere was wont to eye his mail-clad charger with anxious pride, thinking on the lists he was about to enter. And so the *huaso*, for on his horse depend his chances of winning fame among

his fellows ; on it hangs often also what a true Chilean values lightly enough, the rider's life.

A *huaso's* dress is picturesque, with his enormously wide felt or straw hat, leathern gaiters fastened up the back of the leg by many buckles, and a *poncho* which blows backward as he gallops. The trappings of his clever nag are no less worthy of description. Its bridle is of thin hide strips beautifully twisted into a fine rope, adorned with tassels and silver tubes, while the bit also boasts silver ornaments. His high-peaked saddle, in contrast to the wide flat one of the Argentine *gaucho*, is lined into a comfortable nest of black and white sheepskins, and likewise brightened by triangular silver ornaments ending the square flaps. To keep the neatly-coiled lasso from flying loose, there also falls a trident-shaped piece of leather, generally stitched or embroidered. The whip is peculiar, formed by the end of the reins plaited into a heavy thong ; and the girths, often blue and red, are also of hide, the separate strips of which are joined by cross-pieces, with an iron ring for buckle. Lastly, the gigantic wooden stirrups, coal-scuttle in shape, and the huge spurs, radiating like old pictures of the sun, may come from Birmingham ! Most of them now do, but their effect is nevertheless good.

A *haciendado's* costume is not really different from this of the *huaso*, except in the finer material of his clothes, and that his spurs of shining silver are

massive heirlooms. Cruel though these spurs seem, an Englishman, fond of horses and merciful to his beast, told me he used Chilian ones, their rowels being blunt, in preference to the sharp prod of the English spur. The small proprietor's saddle will be



A HACIENDADO.

also much more heavily loaded with chased silver, the back of the peak often bearing the owner's monogram. And the hand-carving of his stirrups is sometimes quaint.

Once all have arrived, the scene of a *rodeo* is most animated. Within the palisades of a wide corral a multitude of cattle—bulls, cows, and calves

—are huddled in a surging, lowing mass. These are to be parted—a dangerous business. Outside the corral gates runs a long palisade, ending in separate yards, and by this palisade are ranged the eager volunteers for the day's sport, both gentry and *huasos*, in twos and twos. All take their turns in rotation, and any two men undertake to tackle any animal, however furious.

Now begins the fun. An old man, the *capataz*, once a good horseman, rides into the centre of the corral, and with a long goad keeps pricking whatever beast he singles out. At once the animal begins forcing its way through the herd, seeking escape from the pain. As it nears the gates, these are opened in the nick of time; the two first waiting horsemen standing by. Then the beast—say a bull—sees fancied freedom, and rushes forward.

But a rider is close alongside, whose horse presses heavily on the bull's shoulder, forcing him against the palisade. What is this? Angrily the bovine brute tries to stop short and back, but another horse and man are urging him on from behind. It is beautiful to see the intelligence of the horses in avoiding the bull's horns, and never ceasing the watchful pressure in which lies their safety.

Suddenly the bull stops dead! So does the horse, both fore-legs out and body bearing back. Rolling his red eye, the bull pauses—then makes an unexpected rush. But at the same instant the horse

is off too, having *felt* the first movement of his opponent, and stride for stride horse and bull keep together till the smaller yard for bulls is reached. Then as the big beast rushes in, his tormentors stop, the gate closes, and the riders jog back ; while another pair begin their turn of the sport. None of the riders may use either stick or goad, so the pastime is a manly one ; for the horns of both cows and bulls have to be reckoned with.

A *rodeo* is no child's play, for there is seldom a big one at which an accident does not happen, often enough fatal. It may seem strange that the worst mischances happen in driving calves ; but these are lower than the horse's shoulder, so he cannot press on them so easily ; while, also, they dodge and twist under his legs, possibly upsetting him, when his master risks a broken limb or even neck.

Young Chilians of good family are so fond of the excitement of some well-known *rodeo*, that they will even go from Valparaiso to Santiago for one with their favourite horse. But Englishmen, however good horsemen after the fashion of their country, seldom, if ever, attain the Chilian proficiency in *rodeo*-riding or rounding up cattle. Only English born in the land, especially of Chilian mothers, equal their comrades in the corral.

It will also interest our traveller to see the lassoing, although in this practice it is generally conceded that the Argentines are the more dexterous. *Bolas*

are different, these being a pair of leather thongs fastened together, one about twenty-four inches long, the other shorter, to the ends of which are bound three hide-covered round stones, the size of a hen's egg. The shorter line is held in the rider's hand, who whirls the other round his head while galloping at full speed towards the object of attack. Then the *bolas* are thrown, generally either killing or so hindering the victim that it is easily caught. *Bolas* were in use among the Indians when the Spaniards first landed, and many of the invaders were killed by these weapons, which are still not unfrequently seen.

Among other sights, that of a child's wake is most interesting; but, of course, difficult for a foreigner to see, if not impossible. When riding with friends one day, I was surprised to see a man trudging towards a cemetery gate, carrying a small bright-blue coffin unconcernedly over his shoulder. Two women, shrouded in the usual black *mantos*, trotted behind without much semblance of grief. 'That is a very poor funeral,' said my companions. 'Generally a *huaso* gallops off after the wake with the coffin under his arm; he is half tipsy from drinking *chicha* in the house, so he and his comrades race along the roads, and maybe drop the coffin!' On inquiring further, full particulars were given me of this custom, which again reminded me of old Ireland, my native land.

Wakes for persons of all ages are not uncommon in Chili ; but especially the *velono* of a child is made an occasion for feasting, as the sinless babe is supposed to become straightway a little angel, or *angelito*, without passing through the cares and sorrows of life. So this happy event is celebrated by much eating, more drinking, and the neighbours rejoice around the corpse, which is propped up like a small saint, surrounded by lights and flowers. My friend Mrs. C. was one day passing the house of her washerwoman, when she saw a crowd within, singing and carousing. 'Look in, señorita ; it is an *angelito's* wake,' said her maid, who accompanied her. Peeping through the open door, she saw the corpse of a child of three hung up against the wall above the bed ; it was dressed in white, and wreathed round with flowers. The poor mother hovered near, weeping, although partly consoled by her friends' joyful assurances that the *niño* was now become a 'little lamp of light,' which, when she herself died, would show her the way to heaven. The general merriment and singing are also supposed to cheer the infant soul itself on its flight from earth.

Another picturesque custom is that of the *trilla*, or threshing-floor, in country districts. A ring of ground fenced in is brushed clean, and a wheat-stack piled in the middle, on which stands a labourer with a pitch-fork, who flings down grain on the ground. When he is ready, a gate is opened, and a

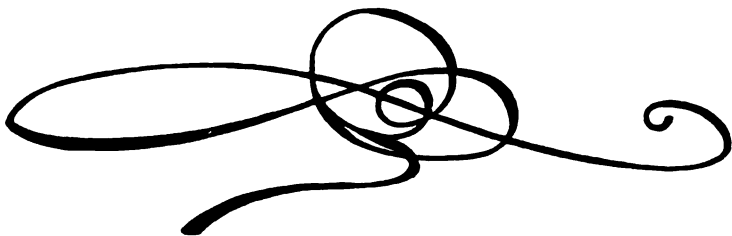
dozen to sixteen mares are driven in by some riders, who gallop round and round as in a circus, shouting vociferously, 'Oh, yegua! yegua! yegua!' ('Mare! mare!'). As mares are seldom, if ever, used for work, they are unshod, and do not bruise the grains. Presently the troop stop, and then gallop in reverse order till the wheat is so deep that the animals can only tread it with labour. When all the straw is trodden, it is forked aside, and the wheat tossed in the air till the wind has winnowed away the chaff.

I have already spoken of the love of song and music as a special trait of the Chilian character; and improvising is also an amusement of theirs. They will sit in a circle, one beginning a song, which all take up in turn. They share this trait with the Argentine *gauchos*, who, however, declaim to the guitar rather than sing, much as the Celtic bards and English minstrels seem to have 'swept the strings,' and then recited the gallant deeds of the chief in whose hall they sat. And so—but far more rudely—the Chilian Indians are said to have formerly recounted at feasts their family histories in sing-song orations lasting for many hours, as did the festival for several days.

But if these last two customs do not affect the passing traveller, there are others that will.

Note the signature to a receipt, for it will be adorned by a flourish peculiar to the writer, and called a *rubrica*. This is affixed by custom to all

documents of importance both in Chili and the Argentine Republic; and it is a far worse crime to forge the *rubrica* than the name of anyone, for the genuineness of a document is tried by this sign manual. Here is a simple *rubrica* used by a tradesman, and which I copied :



But the public notaries have far more elaborate ones, needing time and care to draw, and almost always (in the Argentine, at least) ending with a cross at the top, which seems suggestive of a church origin. This rude outline drawn for me by an old resident will give a faint idea of the original :



Another thing to be noted is the system of employing young women as tram-conductors. They

are neatly and nautically dressed in serge gowns and sailor hats, besides large white aprons, with ample pockets for the pennies ; while a small seat under the doorway awning gives them rest and shelter. It is light work ; they are civil ; and men's brains and superior muscles are not wasted.

As to telephones, every house has one, and from morning to night folk are ringing up neighbours or being rung up. Even in the charming retreat of the Zorras, a hill-nook some two miles out of Valparaiso, country residents 'speak' in to town, or beyond it, to friends, giving news or invitations to tea and tennis. And one morning I was surprised at holding a chat with a friend at Santiago, 114 miles distant—just an easy discourse, in the clearest of tones, on a copper wire.

But telephones can be undesirable—sometimes. For instance, when the Chilian children get hold of the family one, as most of them manage to do. *Ting-a-ring-a-ring!* One morning a friend with whom I was staying for a few days was nearly deafened by a continued call, just as she was deep in consultation with her cook :

'Hallo!'—'Hallo! I don't want you—tell Inés' (the daughter of the house) 'to come.' This squeaked in infantile Spanish. The speaker was quickly recognized as the five-year-old son of a neighbour living some two miles away. Inés, arriving on the scene, called me to share in the fun ; and the flirtation began.

‘Is that you, Inés? I’ve learnt a new song’ (voice swelling with importance). ‘Would you like to hear it?’

‘*Gracias*, boy! how sweet of you!—do sing.’

So the boy chirped at the end of the wire. He sang of ‘Daisy Bell,’ that London street-air I hoped to have left far, far behind across the ocean. The piping little voice, sounding from a distance, was so ludicrous in its serious conviction of giving delight that we went into fits of laughter. Then the good-natured girl would call to her nursery admirer, who, though English by parentage, was still in his first, or Spanish, stage of speech.

‘Bravo, boycito!—tan rico! No sabe nada mas, boycito?’ (Bravo, little boy!—quite delightful! Don’t you know another, little man?)

Now, this was only one out of many instances. We have something more to be grateful for yet in English homes than some people think.

Again, we may sometimes grumble at the British workman; but whatever his faults, he does not make it a rule of life to get drunk on Sunday, keep it up on Monday, sleep it off on Tuesday, and come back on Wednesday, expecting the *patron* to smile indulgently on his weakness. Or, if this is a slightly severe account of the *peon*, shall we say he may generally return on Tuesday?

Then as to the servant question—one of world-wide household interest, which may perhaps be

solved by the late Chino-Japanese War, and an outpouring of Chinese emigration — our home-bred Mary Ann and Jane are not half so high-spirited as Carmen or Clotilda. On the least provocation, such as a well-merited reproof, these exclaim, 'Me voy!' (I'm going!), and up they pack their bed and bedding, which each provides for herself, and perhaps some furniture as well, on the backs of a string of donkeys, and whisk off to their friends, quite sure of a place when they please, owing to the scarcity of domestic labour, and meanwhile rejoicing in a holiday-time, when they can wear their hair down their backs in a long plait, muffle up in an old shawl, and squat on the ground to gossip and thrum the guitar.

'Don't offend the lady. She may leave, and you are sure to get a worse,' I have often heard a friend exclaim, in mock dismay, if in his presence any maid made some blunder, such as closing the shutters outside, and leaving a whole party in the dark before she appeared to light the gas or lamps.

This, Irish fashion, was spoken in half jest and whole earnest, for there was much truth in the warning. But when a Chilian servant is good, he or she can be most faithful and trustworthy. Nurses especially, so mothers have told me, are invaluable in quickness and cleverness when children are ill, their own country remedies generally forestalling the doctor's orders.

Chili, however, merits high praise for its good

example of honesty and present steadiness of government among its weak-kneed neighbours.

And now, as this poor description of my happy visit in Chili is drawing to a close, what but on the whole a warm and good impression is left on my mind of the country, its future, and its people? Even as I write these words in England, a great piece of news comes from over seas, namely, that the 'conversion' will soon be a fact. 'The *conversion*?' does somebody ask. Yes, of the pest-laden paper-money into silver. The 'price of the dollar' was *the* one engrossing topic of talk and anxious thought of everyone during late times in Chili. Friends used to say on meeting, not 'How are you?' but 'How is the dollar to-day?' During my short stay, it varied from eighteenpence down to even, for a few days (if I rightly remember), tenpence and one-sixteenth in value. How the poor, ignorant *peones* must have wondered why their wages only bought half as much bread, melons, and *chicha* as before!

But on this currency question so much has been written by wiser persons that I only record my gladness at so hopeful a beam of sunshine illumining the future of Chili. May its prosperity be as assured as sound-thinking English residents believe who invest confidently in country industries.

And few or none doubt it will be so if, satisfied with the rich nitrate fields wrested from Peru, Chili will wait and develop her own inner resources before longing to stretch her borders further yet.

ADIEU TO CHILI.

It was now August, and time for me to say adieu to Chili, and take an English mail steamer northward for Peru, whither I was warmly invited by Mr. and Mrs. R., as yet unknown friends, but who had heard from relations in Valparaiso of my visit to the West Coast.

Letters of introduction were also kindly given me by our Minister in Chili to the chief British representatives in Peru.

Before departure, I was much amused to hear that 'all the girls in Valparaiso would like to kiss me,' as their champion and friend, which exceedingly gratified me. May they remember me yet a little while. This was how it came about. The debating club had announced that at their next meeting the girls of the day were to be discussed, and many-tongued rumour declared that the attacking party had been for some weeks preparing a terrific onslaught, furnished with war materials from all the wildest novels of the season. The defenders,

on the contrary, were more sadly studying past records of noble womanhood, meaning to argue that human nature alters little, and what was, will be. The members were men only; so to satisfy the eager yearnings of all Valparaيسان womanhood to hear itself accused, a larger hall than usual was engaged to accommodate the lady guests, and a special train ran from Viña.

There was a great crowd; an eager hush of attention to the fiery denunciations of the orators, only broken by pained breathings of engaged girls, even whose *fiancés* smiled among the jeering opposite mass of men. The feminine anger simmered and spread till at last there was not a woman present, old or young, but was inwardly boiling with righteous indignation. Perhaps the president feared danger unless a safety-valve were provided. He suddenly asked—to the universal surprise—would any guest wish to reply for her sex.

Some horrid moments followed, during which I was pinched black and blue, was prodded from behind, while from farther away came girlish whispered entreaties, 'Oh, speak for us—do! Now I had never before addressed even a private audience; but plainly someone ought to rise—and no one else would.

So I found myself, without preparation, making my first speech—the most timid David that ever faced the Philistines, slinging facts hastily gathered

from the shore of London's sea of life. However, the audience was most kindly interested, and after I had bravely struggled past each point hastily marked in my mind to the goal, my friends treated it as a winning-post, and lavished more flattery on me than these candid critics are wont to bestow.

So the evening came when the big mail steamer of 6,000 tons took me on board, waving regretful adieux to my kind hosts and old friends. And for twelve days to follow we glided north, by mountains from 3,000 to 4,000 feet high, never far inland, and often rising sheer from the lazily-rolling, deep Pacific. But for stopping every day, at some townlet, often a mere handful of wooden dwellings on a strip of sand, between the grandly barren cliffs and the terrible sea with its tidal waves after earthquakes, one should get to Callao in half the time. Coquimbo was reached the first afternoon : a small place, only notable to me for the big sea-lions sunning themselves on its rocks, one with a grand mane. Next day Caldera, scattered among sand-drifts ; and then Antofagasta, with its silver foundries and railway running up a desolate valley towards Bolivia. Smaller ports followed, where the ship dispensed stores and the produce of the fertile South to the dwellers on these sandy beaches, where no green plant grows and fresh water is brought from far inland by pipes, or distilled from the sea.

Iquique, the most important town on the Chilian

coast after Valparaiso, was reached, I think, on the fifth morning, and here we stayed till afternoon. It was very like all the other ports, only larger and handsomer. The agent of the late Colonel North kindly sent a boat and one of his English young men to bring me on shore. I was first driven round the wooden town, which is painted green to relieve the eyes, tired from the surrounding sands and arid background of bluffs. Four flower-plots and some real, if ragged, young trees in a *plaza* were displayed with pride; for every drop of water in Iquique comes from eighty miles above, across the nitrate pampas.

One hears tales so terrible of how Iquique was twice washed away by tidal waves, in 1868 and in 1877, that it was strange to see wide, sandy streets, roomy houses, tram-cars and—wonder of wonders in South America!—excellent street vehicles.

‘But how can people live and work and look happy knowing that any night they may all be engulfed in the ocean?’ I cried. My hearers shrugged their shoulders. There was money to be made: then watchers guard the shore to give warning if the tide recedes unusually, a sign of the sea gathering itself into the dreaded great wave. Yes, as in 1868, there would be probably half an hour’s time before the wave rose from forty to sixty feet high, as variously reckoned along the coast. One could snatch up anything handy and fly to the railway-

station, where there is always a train ready to start uphill for the pampas.

Other travellers have described these vast, barren pampas, where the nitrate layers are buried for leagues under sand ; where the dynamite explosions rise in white columns, dotting the fields ; and the great *oficinas*, or works, are like small fortified villages, set some miles apart in the monotonous plain. I could not spare time to test their famous hospitality, and enjoy the rides and evening dances of which cheerful tales are told.

Towards eleven my host, Mr. M. and his wife, after showing me their pretty home, drove me through wide sands along the shore to the point of Cavanha. Here on some rocks is a restaurant, the favourite resort of merry-makers ; and we met other ship-board friends and Iquiquians, also invited like myself to breakfast. The wooden building was gay with a few flowers and some macaws ; while the sea flowed under our open-air parlour, and was clearly seen, green and cool, between the boards. What with sea-breeze, good fare and good company, it was a most pleasant meal.

As usual, we took a large cargo on board of live stock, cows or mules. The latter, one night when the ship rolled terribly, had a stampede under my head. Other unlucky people were wakened. But at Pisagua I became truly envied, when we coaled at night, the lighters unloading beside my necessarily

closed ports (*two* cabins had been allotted me, as a most favoured mortal). To the condolences which greeted me at breakfast from heavy-eyed fellow-passengers, I could cheerfully reply that my sleep had been unbroken.

Now some few travellers dislike this West Coast voyage. They hate the long, slow roll of the ocean, though hardly a wave is ever seen; weary of the shore view; and are rightly vexed with the thievery of Chilian or Peruvian sailors, which forces everyone to lock and bar cabin doors and windows carefully.

But these are not lovers of the sea. Many more—like myself—really enjoy the fine weather and the unbroken range of great cliffs past which one glides. Then the vessels are big, the stewards honest and attentive; and the daily stoppage at the little ports had an interest of its own. Curious it is to land and see what crazy wooden shanties even British-born men will live in happily here, and declare there is no tonic comparable to the dry air of this rainless coast! For the sea-winds blow up and down this Pacific shore, but take no moisture inland, while the high chain of the Andes acts as a barrier to the rain-clouds which gather on their further, Brazilian, side.

Many invalids would surely be benefited were they to make this journey round South America, as I did, but at a different season. Were they to leave England in September, they would reach Buenos Ayres three weeks later to find the spring-

time. Then, so soon as the snows were melted on the mountains, they could cross the Cordilleras into Chili for a month of summer weather. New Year's Day might see the travellers in Peru, where they could visit the sugar-cane fields—the finest in the world. And there, after the usual three days' wait of the mail steamers, on for twelve more days from Callao to Panama ; and so across the green jungle of the isthmus. A three days' run would bring them to the dream-island of Jamaica in its loveliest and cool season, where a month to enjoy its tropical beauty would be all too short before sailing home to spring once more in April.

And hardier travellers, too—those who go round the world with less forethought than our ancestors when making the grand tour of Europe—they would find here a new track, with plenty of rough work, should they diverge into Paraguay, Bolivia, or the interior of Peru.

Lastly, should this route become more used, doubtless some drawbacks at present existing, such as the slowness of the Pacific trip, would be greatly improved.

A LAND OF 'AFTER TO-MORROW.'

IT was on a wintry morning—*i.e.*, in August, 1894—that I looked at the low landspit of Callao through a gray drizzle that wetted the decks of the big Pacific mail-steamer and the thronging visitors.

'Oh, it is not rain. It never really rains in Peru, and people laugh if one puts up an umbrella.'

So said my kind English (hitherto unknown) friends, come on board to welcome several relations from Chili and myself. These were the R.'s, who had sent me the hospitable invitation, before-mentioned, to stay with them in Peru, hearing of my visit to Valparaiso from mutual friends there, and knowing me through my novels.

If not rain, the mist was sufficiently damping. Confusion and bustle still reigned through the ship, though from six o'clock that morning we had been uselessly roused, and it was now past ten. Would our luggage never be got up from the hold?

'*Paciencia*,' quoted one of my fellow-passengers from Chili, who had spent twenty years of his life in Peru. 'We have a saying down south that the

Chilians only conquered the Peruvians in the late war because, though Chili is a land of "To-morrow" (*mañana*), Peru is a land of "After To-morrow."

At last we were rowing ashore, where swarms of the most hybrid specimens of humanity ever seen were perched in ragged rows on a mean jetty. They looked to me like so many buzzards.

'Yes, they are a polyglot lot. You see there the native shore-Indians, or *cholos*, mixed with a low Spanish type; then the imported negro element and the Chinese. A mixture of negro-Chinese is a fairly-common, queer result. But the Chinaman is scorned even by the negroes here. He is called the lowest of the low.'

Mr. R., my host to be, was the speaker, and his wife added an illustration of this contempt. She was looking out of a window in Lima one day, attracted by a noise in the street, and saw a curious scene. A *borracho*, or drunkard, was lying on the ground deaf to the urgings of the *selladores*, or police, who wished him to come and be locked up; so these, looking round the assembled crowd, caught violent hold of two Chinamen, desiring them to carry the man to prison. The insult had its desired effect. Rather than be contaminated by such vile hands, the tipsy wretch staggered to his feet, and walked away quickly with his captors.

On landing, one of my friends took me for a walk round Callao, which was much more old-world than

any town I had yet seen in South America. Its long-galleried windows had a Jacobean air; closed wooden balconies like huge packing-cases nailed to the walls overhung the street; the *plaza* was gay with flowering shrubs. Nevertheless, the real old port of the *conquistadores* was engulfed by a tidal wave, following a great earthquake, and ruined walls are said to be still sometimes visible under the sea. Peru has always been a pious country, so a little thanksgiving chapel was at once reared on the sands by the survivors to mark where the inflowing tide had stayed—of thanksgiving that their own lives were spared, though their loved ones were taken. Surely a memorial chapel, dedicated to sorrow and penitence, would seem more fitting.

Now the train was starting, and half an hour's run brought us to Lima. The country we passed through seemed to my eyes flat, treeless, and brown. Roads ankle-deep in dust were walled on either side by imposingly massive blocks that might be supposed concrete, but were only adobe, or dried mud. Beyond in the drab-coloured fields wound a serpentine mound, or low hill, its surface strewn with loose stones like a sea-beach, except where some mud-brick arches protruded.

'Look!' cried someone; 'that is a well-known *huaca*, one of the catacombs or storehouses of the old Incas.'

With eyes fresh from finishing Prescott's 'Con-

quest of Peru,' I looked, expecting to see stone ruins. What a disappointment!

'Welcome to the City of Kings!' said my new friends, as our train arrived at Lima, and, emerging into wet, greasy streets, we hurried hungrily towards the Hotel de Francia y Inglaterra.

It was still rain—— nay! gently drizzling. Under these circumstances, I was not prepared to notice keenly any differences between the sights here and in other South American towns now fairly familiar. Yet the rather imposing outlines and dome of San Domingo Church did give me a sensation of surprise as we passed. Not from its size. Had not everyone already told me this was a city of churches, and Peru still a country of such fervid religious feeling that inland, if foreigners do not kneel in the dust, and the men uncover, as a procession passes by, their hats will be knocked off and themselves roughly treated?

No, it was merely that its whitewashed, adobe walls were garnished with huge panels coloured, apparently, by somebody's unrivalled washing-blue. A statue of Mercury, ready to hop, surmounted it, flanked by a guard of hideous turkey-buzzards roosting in security. The *gallinazos* are the recognized town scavengers, and a fine of about ten shillings is imposed upon anyone killing one of these loathsome but useful servants of the Peruvian Board of Health.

Here was the hotel close by. Entering the *patio*, used as an open-air dining-room, we found breakfast awaiting us at a table under the gallery, and, besides more solid dainties, we partook of early green peas, strawberries, and the famous orange-coloured potatoes of Peru. The latter are excellent, but on transplantation to any foreign country lose their golden hue and mealy qualities, it is said. A good many other people were enjoying a noontide *once*. There were creepers all around, sawdust underfoot, sun-blinds overhead—not needed in the soft gloom of the wintry day. Lastly, the cooking was fairly good.

And now my friends were anxious to start by train for their home in Miraflores, a pretty village near the coast, seeing it was Sunday morning, therefore a holiday to be enjoyed. They kindly wished me to accompany them at once, declaring that their *ranchito* (little cottage) was elastic, and would accommodate not only their uncle and cousins—my fellow-passengers, who were going on to England when the steamer started three days hence—but also myself, whom they expected on a longer visit.

But I stoutly declined to risk overcrowding them, or intruding into the family circle, whose time for pleasant confidences must be so brief.

Upon my decision to stay two days in the hotel, Mrs. R. led me up a wide wooden stair (on which the passers-by freely spat), to a matted gallery over-

head surrounding the *patio*. Here she commended me to the special care of Manuela, the manageress, who sat huddled in a shawl, sewing patchwork strips of hideous pattern. The latter rose joyously, with a true Peruvian greeting. She threw her arms wide, and bent forward as if to hug my friend, but in reality never touched her. A street embrace between ladies here is much the same as in Chili, both acquaintances patting each other on the back as if to cure a fit of coughing.

‘Pray remember to hold up your dress, for you will not find *anywhere* very clean. And I do hope you will not be lonely,’ said Mrs. R. in reluctant parting.

Lonely? Not at all. Ten minutes later visitors were announced—a young lady I had met in Chili, who, being on a visit to relations, had hurried with a brother-in-law, hearing I was alone. This was only the beginning of an unequalled kindness I was shown, first by my hosts, next by their neighbours; for, indeed, all the West-coasters are justly famous for their hospitality. Then another friend from Chili, who had come on board to meet me, arrived as my cicerone for the afternoon.

‘We will go first to the Lima Exposition—*i.e.*, it was one some years ago, but now it is the museum,’ said Mr. D.

Our street-carriage was passable, but not so the terrible pavements over which we jolted, through

small streets, to the museum gardens. Fire-brigade practice (a partly volunteer service, I understood, and officered by gentlemen) was going on in the wide, dusty *plaza*, beyond which the garden-walls enclosed tall palms and other verdure refreshing in this barren and dry land.

The museum itself was a handsome whited sepulchre, full verily of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Its large rooms showed everywhere shameful neglect. Here were cases of glorious orange or blue butterflies mixed up with all manner of other insects promiscuously. There lay on the floor pictures of the Incas, dropping from their frames. Windows stood wide open on rusty hinges, and the damp air rotted the curious Inca garments of woven and embroidered guanaco wool; the narrow baskets full of dyed yarn and knitting-pins once buried with dead Inca owners. Their very bodies——

Poor bodies! Looking at some curious and regular knotting of heavy cord round a square parcel left carelessly on a bench, and done up in what seemed ancient sacking, I noticed coarse human hair protruding from a rent.

'An Inca mummy. They are found buried on the sea-shore at Ancon, where the sand has preserving qualities, as elsewhere,' explained my companion. When foreign ships came in, it used to be a common practice to make prodding-parties for mummies. By poking with iron rods, they could be felt under the

surface. But now Government reserves the rights over these hunting-grounds.'

Then, going outside, we inspected the Zoo, where the elephant had lately seized his keeper, cracking his ribs, and then flinging him aside dead. The brute still looked cross—was ill, they said. Near by a splendid lion was confined in a slight cage, its masonry broken away at the side. We admired this truly Peruvian trait, but still more admired a beautiful black bird with an orange bill and comb. It was called a mountain turkey, and had the trick, peculiar to the turkey tribe, of shivering at times.

On our return, we paused in the very heart of Lima—its great *plaza*. This is bounded by the big Cathedral on one side and the low terra-cotta-coloured walls of the President's palace on another, while arcades and shops fill the remaining half. 'Pizarro's Cathedral,' was my thought, gazing with pleased satisfaction at the twin domes of the big pile. It might be barbarous in architecture, only built of adobe; still, the effect of its size and comparative age was picturesque in this South American land, where the European mind pines for ancient history and art.

'In all the revolutions here—and they are legion—one side or other seizes those towers. See the bullet-holes in them!' remarked my companion. 'The top windows are mostly used to hang Presidents from. Hallo! there is Caceres' (then President)

living in the brougham. I wonder how soon he will be turned out. The insurgents—Piérola's men—were within five miles of this town last week, you know.

I knew indeed—and it was to my bitter vexation later—that a revolution was already blazing in scattered fires over the mountains. Six months afterwards saw Lima's streets swimming in blood, and Nicolás Piérola replaced in his old power.

Last week for three days there was a crowd staring for hours at a brace of black ducks roosting on that tower, went on my occupation. A rumour ran like wildfire that this was a strange portent, only seen before a President was murdered. People actually came up by train from Chorrillos and Miraflores to view the sight. Nobody much minds a revolution here, they are too frequent. When a row begins in Lima, "Cerra puertas!" Shut the doors!) is the cry, and everyone bolts into the nearest house before the big street-doors are barred. There they stay a day or two till the shooting in the streets ceases—it is a recognized duty to give sanctuary. Then the peaceable folk come out and ask, "Please, who is President?"

Another tale was told me later by a friend of the individual to whom this incident happened, and who arrived in Lima during a rising. Being all alone in the street, he saw a soldier covering him with a rifle, who cried "¿Quien vive?" Unable to guess on

which side the fellow was, the Englishman had the presence of mind to answer 'La Patria,' and was allowed to pass.

So chatting, we strolled across the wide *plaza*, prettily dotted with shrubs, its kidney pavement relieved to the feet by flagged paths. And looking once more at the sun-baked Cathedral walls and its pillars of imitation marble, I thought of a thrilling account given me lately on ship-board by an eye-witness of the strange spectacle which happened on these very stones in 1873.

Said my friend: 'In that year I held a post in a Lima bank, and was newly married. The times were troubled, and one day the President Gutierrez had me dragged out of my house, on the charge of giving money to the opposition, and for two and a half hours I was kept waiting with soldiers drawn up ready to shoot me. Of course I was a British subject, but little Gutierrez cared.

'Two days later, when I had been worried, but let off, that same man was murdered in the street by the mob; or, to speak exactly, they pursued him into a chemist's shop, where he sought refuge, and despatched him as he was hiding in a bath. They hated him so that they stripped his body, and hung it out of the highest window in one of the Cathedral towers. That same day they caught and killed his brother down at Callao, whose corpse they dragged some eighteen miles into Lima at the tail of a cart,

and then hanged it on the other Cathedral tower. But their revenge was not complete. The mob sacked the house of Gutierrez—dragged everything out of it, even to the very beams of wood. Then they piled the spoil in the centre of the *plaza*, set fire to the mass, and next, though it sounds hardly credible, except of savages, they cut down the body of Gutierrez, which, falling from that height, was crushed on the pavement. But they flung the shapeless mass on the bonfire, after which they danced round, drinking and scrambling for his charred bones to stir up their *chicha*.'

The particulars of this horrid tale were confirmed to me later in every detail. One Peruvian gentleman added that he had himself seen a brawny negro fight for a morsel of burnt flesh, which he gnawed with gusto. Looking up to a balcony, he caught the Peruvian's eye, who asked, 'Why do you do that?' 'Ah, señor!' said the negro, 'when he was General, he tortured my brother, who was in the army.' 'Gutierrez was a devil incarnate to his soldiers, and he deserved all he got, in my opinion,' added the native-born speaker.

And now we returned to the hotel, where presently dinner was again served under the *patio* gallery; darkness and mist in the centre, but lamps and some gaudily crimson or blue silk gowns, worn by plump, dark-eyed Peruanas, brightening the tables.

STREET SIGHTS IN LIMA.

IT is truly said that first impressions should be noted when travelling in a strange country, or they will fade. Mine, as I write these pages a year later in England, give an agreeable recollection of my Lima hotel, with its jungly effect of creepers and shrubs in the open-air court and galleries. But here is an extract from my note-book, which prosaically describes facts: 'Going downstairs to breakfast just now, it struck me an umbrella might be useful fastened above my chair, as it was drizzling fast. Feeling softly wetted now as I write, I see with surprise that an unnoticed skylight overhead has some panes missing. The wooden walls of my chamber are papered in that blue shade we see at home on parcels of sugar. The door, which has no handle, opens by means of a heavy key on an upper brick-paved passage, also free to the air and drizzle. A screen of yellow *tropæolum* is flowering prettily across the *patio* balustrade, and the smallest humming-birds I have yet seen are playing around the flowers.

‘Yes, it is picturesque ; but still’——The pause signifies that some customs of the house are horrid. It is idle to add we will leave them to imagination, for no British mind could dream of them without a previous disagreeable experience. The printed rules hung in each bedroom for the good behaviour of travellers is a shock, to begin with.

Does one want hot water ? There are no bells, so you go outside and clap your hands, as if in energetic applause of somebody, till, by good luck, Matildo appears. He is the sole chambermaid, boots, etc.

Being alone on my first morning in Lima, I resolved to look round the town, so sallied forth to inspect the nearest churches, after duly tying a black mantilla over my head. When European ladies, even good Catholics, have inadvertently gone to worship in South America wearing a bonnet, the worldly head-gear has been nearly pulled off by feminine sticklers for propriety. Further, in Peru the black *manto*, or shawl, is daily donned in the streets by every lady, even more commonly than in Chili, where European ideas are creeping in, learnt by travel. The difference between the sterner Chilian character and the light-minded Peruvian one is shown even in this trifle. A Chilena’s longer, stronger face is swathed in the rigid folds of a silk or stuff shawl, but a Peruana glances coquettishly past the filmy lace border of her light crape head-wrap. Some young

girls even dare to wear only lace, in Spanish fashion ; a charming frame to their round, pretty faces, that have such roguish or languishing black eyes and kissable mouths.

The Peruvian churches have suffered with the prevailing ruin of the country ; though a few boast good wooden carvings, they are otherwise sadly squalid. Crowds of women kneel night and morning on their dirty, ill-bricked floors ; on the walls tawdry velvet hangings are dropping from their fastenings, and spotted with candle-grease ; miserable images are wreathed with grimy paper flowers.

It was more pleasant to pass down the *plaza* arcades and peer for curios in the bric-à-brac shops, of which Jacoby is king. He is famed as an honest man here—a German Jew, who landed as a penniless lad, one of a family of fifteen, and who made his fortune. Here was great plenty of Inca relics, supposed to have been found in the burial-mounds. These are mostly pottery vases, of which it is said the greater part, and certainly the most proper in subject, now come from Birmingham ; also Indian feather garments and lances, or blowpipes and poisoned arrows from the Amazon district beyond the great Cordilleras ; silver dishes and vessels were massed in the windows, besides filigree turkeys for incense, and sometimes a ‘royal turkey’ or peacock. Bolivian Indian spoons also have a sharp skewer-handle,

which serves also as a fork, and, the meal over, is used to fasten the loosely-woven *poncho*.

Peru, like Chili, has always loved household gear of precious metal. In the famous old Inca days all was of gold in the great houses of the princely caste, the many sons of the Inca sovereigns being ennobled. But when the Spanish conquerors sent galleons of spoil back to Spain, little except silver remained. Traditions teem in the land of golden treasures buried to escape the greed of the cruel white men. Yet where was the gold found, one wonders? The silver-mines inland and on the coast are still fabulously rich, such as the Huanchaca. And think how these have been worked! Is it not told on the coast how at Copiapo, some thirty years ago, during one of the frequent revolutions, lead ran short for the bullets, whereat one man said, 'Nay, but silver is plentiful'; and thereupon the people made silver bullets, and used them.

Yet this modern tale is poor compared to that of the Viceroy of Spain at Cerro de Pasca, who, on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, caused the road to be paved for some miles with silver ingots. Also it is matter of history that on the entry of the Viceroy, Marquis de la Galeta, in 1682, the streets of Lima through which the procession passed were overlaid with bars of solid silver.

Speaking of the Viceroys reminds me of their former Government House, which Mrs. R. showed

me this first day, for, fearing I might be lonely, she kindly called. This house was indeed a delightful woodcut to a page of Middle-Age history. Shades of Drake and Hawkins, of Grenville and good Amyas Leigh—how they rose in the mind, seeing this dwelling of the men they fought!

In a narrow street I was delighted by beautiful wooden balconies overhead, and remarked, 'They look like huge carved chests, hung up on the wall!'

'This is the house,' said my guide, as we passed through a noble wooden entrance, heavily carved, its ponderous doors studded with iron, the beams and corbels of the passage likewise richly worked.

Within, the *patio* was set round with upper wooden arches of Moorish style. A stairway of old wrought woodwork had the most shallow of steps and widest of balusters, with blue and yellow tiling on the walls. The door above, opening on the courtyard gallery, gave me a pleased start of recognition. It was all of baluster-work, *i.e.*, made in rows of tiny wooden balusters set close to admit some air and a little light. Why, these were the same windows described by the witty and worthy Monsieur Frezier, spy of Louis XIV., who, writing of his voyage hither of 1712, complains that glass was so rare in this city that the inhabitants made use of wooden pierced shutters, which rendered the interiors very dark and somewhat chilly in winter. These windows are growing scarce nowadays. How old-world!

One could fancy one of the beruffled, black-garbed Vice-kings, whose portraits still darkly line a gallery in the Exposition, stepping statelily across the court.

After this we wended our way to the public library. The Bibliotheca is severely simple. A vast courtyard ; low rooms, well lined with books ; and this is praiseworthy for Lima, seeing that in the war of 1880 the Chilians carried away the valuable volumes brought from Spain by the old Viceroys, and destroyed the edifice. Above all, the director was most courteous, inviting me, as an English writer, to study Peruvian literature at my pleasure ; which I later did once or twice, to the evident surprise of the various young men and old, who were plainly unaccustomed to such a feminine invasion. With almost tears, the old director showed me a valuable folio that had been recovered from a Chilian 'savage' for a few pence, after the sacking and pillage of the city. Now, I much liked what I had seen of the Chilians ; but what respect for letters can be expected from any soldiery, above all, the fierce half-bred descendants of the warlike Southern Indians ?

But let us notice the street sights, which on this and following days in Lima never failed to interest me. To begin with, cries of warning startle our ears—two tram-cars are crossing in the rough, narrow *calle*, and their mules are refractory.

Alone of its kind in Lima, the street of the

Mercadores is a gem. Its road is smooth ; its side-paths paved with coloured tiles ; the shops gay. But more attractive still is a pet of a Peruvian 'pacer' ambling by. These dear little horses are of Andalusian breed, looking like circus ponies with flowing manes and tails. The well-bred ones have Arab heads raised like deer, while their arched necks seem braced up by the tightest of bearing-reins, instead of merely bridles decked with silver ornaments. Silver also adorns their saddles, beneath which black goat-skins almost hide the small steeds. It is said that good pacers are now being exported to Europe at very high prices, so are growing rare. They should do six miles an hour from daybreak to nightfall without ever cantering or breaking their quick, shuffling gait, which comes from both legs on one side moving at the same time. The riders never rise in the saddle. How different these ladies' palfreys from the sad if swift Argentine nags and the excellent, stout Chilian cobs !

Now came a comic spectacle—that of a tipsy man being taken to prison. No crowd ; no wrangling nor stretcher. Only a policeman wheeling a wooden bath-chair calmly, in which the prisoner was reclining with a drunken smirk ; certainly handcuffed, but otherwise much at his ease.

'Alms for the love of God !' Looking down at a doorstep, there crouched what seemed a human monkey, hugging its knees, and so shrivelled it

seemed as if one of the dried, black Inca mummies from the museum was galvanized into life.

'These beggars are pleasant compared to those who are allowed out on a Saturday from the hospitals as their privilege. Wait till you see them!' said my companion. On one such day I did behold them. Dwarfed, diseased, misshapen, mutilated, they were like the hideous things that gibber round a fever-bed or before a maniac's vision.

But this lowest caste must not be looked upon as other than one type among many in the mixed population of Peru. There are the Cholos, which strictly speaking means the mixed Indian and Spanish race on the sea-board. There are the Sierranos—pure Indians they from the great sierras, who are gentle, obedient creatures, but who often pine and droop from homesickness if taken from their mountain homes. And beyond the chain of the Cordilleras there are the numerous forest tribes and those of the Amazon and its tributaries, some said to be cannibals.

Here comes a Cholo milk-woman riding down the street, sitting astride on her pony's shoulders, the milkcans piled on its back. Her broad Indian face, with its yellow skin, looks almost comely in its cheerful healthiness under a manlike felt hat. In contrast of position, a bread-boy hoists himself on his mule by help of its tail, to which he sits close behind his panniers.

And next, being on the watch for unusual sights,

presently my attention is taken by a small brown dog, with a green lemon hanging round its neck ; he is hairless, but for a tawny patch on the head. This is a Chinese specimen, and the Peruvians love to make pets of this breed. One guesses as much by the care with which an ample-bosomed, black-gowned dame eyes him now trotting at her side, while she also delicately sniffs a lemon carried in her hand to cure a headache. Has the lapdog a headache, too ?

‘ It is unwell, and a lemon is considered a certain cure,’ said my companion, amused at my surprise.

As the afternoon draws on, a cup of chocolate would be refreshing in the Strasburger restaurant, the largest in the *plaza*. Its *patio* has been altered into a garden, with tables set among hibiscus bushes in flower. As we sat down, in swaggered a lean, sportsman-looking *padre*, in shiny hard hat and black *soutane*, to which garb he gave a strangely rakish air. Three very fat gentlemen in uniform waddled in his rear.

‘ Be seated, *coronel*, and you, señores,’ cried he. ‘ Mozo, fetch four bottles of English beer—sharp !’

The grinning waiter leisurely brought four glasses first ; next he brought one bottle of stout. The *padre* flew in a rage.

‘ Four bottles !’ he shouted, slapping the table. ‘ Do you imagine I divide one bottle among my friends ? Four, I tell you !’

The guests laughed, eyeing his eager, shaven visage with sleepy good-humour. Plainly, the *padre* was considered a gay dog, and the energy with which he now marched to choose cigars at the bar received the admiring, if slow, approbation of his friends.

Of other street sights, there are the great doors, with their grated loopholes, belonging to once wealthy houses; massive portals that have withstood many an assault in revolutions, and beyond which one sees noble *patios* and wide galleries. Also there is a pretty square, with the statue of Bolivar the Liberator on a prancing steed. They say he and his charger likewise paw the air in most other South American towns.

Crop-eared donkeys, even horses sometimes, are a frequent and more painful spectacle in Peru. Others have their nostrils slit far up, these mutilations being intended as marks of ownership.

In the *plazas*, at the railways, at all corners, men and boys keep shouting *suerte* (lottery) tickets, and flourishing them in one's face.

'Buy your fate. You may win the big prize, 20,000 soles.'

These lottery tickets are everlastingly sold, and must do much harm by tempting poor work-folk to try their luck instead of trusting to their own labour. Those for small prizes only cost ten cents, but a ticket for the great prize is worth one sol, though

half or quarter tickets are often sold. The sol, or sun—so called from Peru being of old styled the Land of the Sun—is a big silver coin, though its present value is only two shillings. One hears frequently tales of how several Englishmen have been rewarded by the big prize, generally when they had bought the ticket in charity from some starving urchin. All day and every day the sale goes on briskly, its surplus being the main support of the various hospitals and charities, and a very large one. Therefore *suerte* gamblers have the double pleasure of believing that they are also doing a pious deed.

IN A PERUVIAN VILLAGE.

AFTER passing only two nights in the picturesque discomforts of a Lima hotel, I was carried off to Miraflores by my kind friends, the R.'s, who claimed me henceforth as guest during my stay in Peru.

'The steamer has sailed. Our spare room is empty. Come and see life in a Peruvian village,' they said.

Most of the English, American, and German residents here have their homes in this pretty village of Miraflores, which is only some twenty minutes by rail from Lima, and healthily situated on a plateau above the Pacific Ocean, about half a mile inland. Our train sped through flat fields, dried and brown, separated by mud walls sometimes so high and park-like that old associations inspired me with a transient feeling of respect. More often the impression they gave was that of a succession of projected cemeteries, perhaps because the enclosures at this season appeared too arid for any other use. At one station a great herd of cattle crowded in what seemed

to me a narrow field, hardly more dusty and barren than its neighbours. It was the wide bend of a highroad, bless my eyes! and whether my indifferent sight was more to blame, or the poverty of the so-called pastures, the mistake will serve my turn in describing the landscape.

'You have not learnt the value of these walls when we go out for a Sunday afternoon walk,' cried some young people gaily, sitting behind us in the long American car.

And they told how lately, starting for a cross-country ramble, accompanied by some officers from a ship of Her Majesty's Pacific fleet, they were glad to seek safety from savage cows on the broad tops of these walls, along which they promenaded for nearly a mile in single file, smiling on the horned enemy, which kept following in baffled anger.

'Oh, these cows are fierce sometimes. Once or twice, when the bulls from near the mountains have failed for the bull-ring in Lima, a savage cow has been brought into the arena,' it was told me.

Out here a brown hillock rose in the open plain, somewhat like a British barrow, only bare of even a grass-blade. It was the second *huaca* I had seen; but later, in country excursions, they became daily sights. After several contradictory assurances from European friends, a Peruvian gentleman explained as follows the difference between a *huaca* and a *huaco*, a trifle that confused me when hearing of

these ancient granaries, catacombs, or treasure-houses of the Incas. The word *huaca* means a mound; *huaco* is any relic therein found. And now, looking back at Lima, one perceived how oddly shaped, like haycocks, are some hills close to the town. So near are they that, in the frequent revolutions here, poor Lima groans when the forts crowning them are taken by the masters of yesterday, the enemy of to-day, the victors of to-morrow. Behind in the distance loomed the dark mass of the great Cordilleras, which are seldom or never lost sight of when sailing along this Pacific coast.

As we alighted at a small station, the train sped on to Chorillos, the little Brighton, or Trouville, of Peru.

A group we left behind in the train were thither bound to take the air. It consisted of the pretty daughters of President Caceres—since exiled with their parents—plump little creatures, their hair waved, and gowns and hats made after Parisian fashion, their powder and rouge applied in the more lavish manner of South America. These, with a duenna and some undersized, effete-seeming youths, in age from eighteen to twenty, who had most likely begun their society life at fifteen, and whose eye-glasses and varnished leather boots were also most likely brighter and clearer than their wits, made up a typical group of young Peru. Señora Caceres was not with them, to my regret, for I had already heard

strange tales of her chequered life and strong, now despotic, character. Having followed the varied soldier's fortune of her present husband for several years (somewhat as a *vivandière*, it is whispered), her energy of mind helped the General, and won his gratitude while he alone made a fair stand against the conquering Chilians. When Caceres was sent to Paris as the representative of Peru, folk were curious to know how his wife's manners would bear such a crucial test, and crowded round an American who soon after arrived in Lima from the European Mecca of his nation.

'Oh, she is improving wonderfully,' he declared. 'She has learnt not to spit on the carpet.'

Outside Miraflores Station a tramcar, with a pair of mules, trotted us quickly down the straight road, bordered by its side-walk (the village *alameda*), and an avenue of young *ficcos*, planted for the sake of weekly moisture in the deep, smooth-plastered *acequias*, or water-runnels, on either side. The old big trees here were cut down in the war with Chili; since when it is only thanks to the energy of the village *alcalde* that pretty Miraflores is beginning to recover from the effects of its sacking and burning. Two items were now pointed out to my notice, eager of such trifles. The first, that our tram fare was but several small nickel coins, in total value under a penny. The second, that, though the afore-mentioned *acequias* were now dry, Sunday

evening next should hear the sound of water coursing down them. On Sundays the thirsty land is given to drink. Water is turned on from the big canals in the hills inland, but not till late in the day does it reach the coast.

‘One Sunday,’ said my hostess, ‘the water did not come till midnight, and we were up with lamps, helping our old Chinese gardener and the Peruvian house-boys to divert it from the larger garden-channels into the tiny cross ones. You shall see them!’

This I did, and admired the ingenuity with which miniature canals are conducted through all gardens in Peru with apparent childishness, till one learns that heavy mists alone naturally water this country. Each plot is carefully divided by tiny runnels, in which blocks of wood are used as sluice-gates. Every small flower-square is then flooded, till the garden resembles toy filtering-beds filled in turn. Now, this system of thorough irrigation, spreading its ramifications into the villages, is distinctly Peruvian. Furthermore, the far-conquering Incas of Peru left behind in Chili—and even across the great mountains, in Mendoza, a province now Argentine—their wonderful art of veining the land with great and lesser canals, fed from sources high among the Andes’ snows.

Miraflores village looked a charming retreat as our train passed its pretty villas, nestling under high

trees, some with big bulbous trunks, others with long air-roots hanging like creepers from their branches. But it was sad to see how often, in gardens glowing with the scarlet blossoms of a tropical land, rose the roofless shells of large houses, once tenanted by rich merchants, before the Chilian invasion, now the abode of washerwomen whose linen hung out from the gaping, fire-blackened windows.

However, Mother Nature had done her best to repair the ravages of hideous war.

As we alighted where the tramway ended, the glory of flowers glowing on the bushes below, and spread in giant mantles high among the trees, fairly ravished my sea-weary eyes, so that I drew my breath inward with delight. Along the high garden-wall a bougainvillea spread for yards in such heavy thickets of violently purple blossom that the masonry was breaking down under the weight of its twisted tendrils, which sprang from a gnarled trunk thick as a tree. Its native name here is *brocambile*, less pretty than the Argentine one of Santa Rita. Still grander, though more subdued in gorgeous colouring, was the spectacle of two tall trees across the road, like standard-bearers displaying great banners of rich red and orange shades mingling as flame and fire. What might this glorious creeper be? For two days I was puzzled, unable rightly to distinguish the flower high overhead. On the third morning a stray, low-growing cluster was captured

and kindly brought me, when it proved to be a twin sister to Santa Rita, another variety of what we call bougainvillea, which I had not seen either in Argentine or Chilian gardens, or in English hot-houses.

‘Welcome to our *ranchito*!’ said my hostess, as she pointed to her garden-railings, beyond which rose the veranda of a pretty bungalow.

Even a brief glance at the garden first was a pleasure. Native smilax (last seen in London ballrooms) wreathed its delicate green leaflets and tendrils about the veranda pillars, while baskets of wild maidenhair, transplanted from the cliffs, hung above. Further away, giant white heliotrope contrasted with the glow of poinsettias and hibiscus. Before a thicket of purple convolvulus, or morning glory, sprawled a queer shrub over the ground, bearing a huge leaf seeming pierced in a pattern, and an equally huge apparent flower, like a thick white china cup with a stout central cone. Some friends afterwards told me they had seen this plant described in an American scientific journal as a very rare and curious one. They vainly tried to recover the journal for me, but, quoting from memory, said that the supposed flower was really the fruit.

Another shrub, which I often admired in Peru, bore crimson flowers like small thistles, but soft as down when brushed against the cheek. This, one Peruvian gardener told me, was the ‘*flor del Inca*’;

and the poinsettia he called the 'cardinal flower.' But a second gardener reversed these names; and even in the neglected Botanical Garden it was impossible to gain any information about native plants.

In Chili a friend of mine, devoted to his flowers, was so fired by a description in a British magazine of the beauty of poinsettias that he ordered some out from England. What was his wrath, when they blossomed, to find they were only the native 'flor del Inca,' as common as are sweet-peas with us!

Entering the glass house-door from the veranda, we stepped straight into the drawing-room, as is usual in these *quintas*. Thence a passage, with bedrooms on either side, ended in the dining-room. The servants entered here by another door-window from the back-veranda and garden region, where were wooden out-houses for the domestics' quarters and kitchen.

My hostess was greeted, as we sat down to afternoon tea, by Chocolaté, an aged brown dachshund, who brought her a withered leaf in his mouth. Then, seeing me, he trotted outside and eagerly returned to lay a similar tribute at the guest's feet. Presently, as two bright American girls dropped in from a neighbouring villa, there rose a pile of leaf-offerings on the carpet, which the old courtier eyed contentedly. Where had the poor vagabond picked up the doggish idea that such gifts were pleasing, we wondered?

He was a legacy from a deceased old Chinese gardener, who used to live in a tiny hut among the vegetables and fruit-trees behind the house.

Later on, I was introduced to a pleasant bedroom, also on the ground-floor; then dinner followed, for which some Lima friends arrived by train and tram.

Whilst staying down South in Chili, the fame of certain Peruvian dishes had already reached my ears. My palate now promptly declared that white soup, thickened with Indian corn, and flavoured by strong country cheese, which colours the surface to an orange hue, is excellent fare. And when fish followed, *seviche* was hailed rapturously by two English guests, come up from Chili on business, and who, like most *gringos*, were extravagantly fond of this Peruvian dish.

Seviche is raw fish cooked in the juice of bitter oranges or lemons. Do not feel shocked. It is *really* cooked when served. At ten in the morning the fish—which, like all those on the Pacific coast, is large and coarse compared with the delicate finny denizens of Northern waters—the fish, I repeat, is laid in flakes on a shallow dish, with sufficient lemon-juice poured over to cover all. After soaking in this acid till evening, the flakes are no longer rosy, but white, as if boiled. The fish is then seasoned with strips of tomatoes and pungent chilis, while various hot vegetables were handed round with the *seviche* when I tasted it. There were Indian corn toasted,

and the same boiled on the cob ; yellow potatoes, yam, and the yucca-root, which is like a giant parsnip.

The rest of the meal, reminding us pleasantly of England, needs no description ; excepting that Juan, the Chinese cook, proved justly famed for his *picantes*, or savoury dishes.

Sitting in the drawing-room later, while the gentle winter air came through the open door, the talk turned naturally on the news of the day. How near were the insurgent *monteneros* now to Lima ? Were they likely to seize the world-famous mountain railroad running from Lima to Oroya up in the mountains, at one point 15,000 feet high ? Rumour said they were hovering near this coveted line at several points ; had seized a British overseer of certain works, and only released him on payment of a ransom. Their late prisoner was then freed for an hour or so, when he was sportively caught again, cat and mouse fashion, and this time a double ransom was claimed. Luckily, by some means the captive escaped, struck the line, and, finding a trolley, was soon rushing by the impetus of this hand-car down the line on deep declines by overhanging cliffs and terrible ravines, till he had put some thousands of feet between him and his persecutors. These hand-cars, though dangerous even with a strong brake, are sometimes used by engineers and their friends on this Oroya line, the highest and most precipitous in the world.

If Lima were besieged by the Piérolistas (as came to pass six months later), what would happen? laughed some young folk. 'We foreigners should be forced to shut ourselves in our houses, live on tinned stores and the garden and fowl-yard produce; perhaps eat the peacocks,' said the elders, speaking from experience.

In these frequent revolutions the unhappy Chinese in Peru are the first sacked. An English merchant told me that during the Chilian war many of these implored him to store their household gear in his *bodegas*, or cellars, for safety.

'Ah; those Chilian soldiers were devils!' exclaimed a Peruvian gentleman to me, his eye firing. He owned an English face and bearing, and an English surname, by the way, but was native born and bred, and a Peruvian on his mother's side and by feelings. 'Do you know how they acted after the battles here which they won? I will tell you. First they rested, and then in cold blood they went back to the field for the *repasso*!—*doing it over again*! You understand, eh? They killed all the wounded.'

He went on to explain that one reason for the Chilian victories, in his opinion, was that their officers gave the men raw spirits before a battle, so that they 'fought as if going to—well, you guess *where*.'

'But our soldiers were all advised to confess their sins, and the priests went busily to and fro, urging

them to get absolution. So the poor fellows grew frightened and lost heart. Why, a priest came to my tent, too, that night, and—— Well, I have not often confessed, but this time I thought, “ Perhaps it will make my family more happy.”’

Our friend became so excited by these memories that the rest prudently changed the drift of conversation, and drew him to tell me some of the legends with which Peru is teeming; also of the superstitions, especially among the poor folk, besides their terror of ghosts, called *penas*. On this and other evenings the English would chime in, reviving memories of many things which had struck them as strange when they came to Peru. Custom too soon stales the first fresh impressions in a foreign land, which, if sometimes disagreeable, yet have the interest of novelty, and are often a charm to minds impatient of monotony.

For instance, British godfathers and godmothers may be surprised to hear that the Roman Catholic law here forbids such ‘gossips’ to intermarry, because their spiritual alliance is too close. Said a bearded seafaring giant to me, with an honest laugh :

‘ My wife pretends to be jealous of a great friend of hers. Then she says to me in triumph : “ At all events, if even I die, you can never marry Juanita Montt, because I made you both be *commadre* and *compadrino* together to my brother Enrique’s boy.” She managed that well.’

Again, in a crowded assembly once, some people near me kept stealing glances at a Peruvian lady who wore handsome diamonds.

‘That is Señora So-and-so; her husband put her in the House of Correction, you know,’ they startled me by whispering.

What might this expression mean? Enlightenment came later from the Peruvian gentleman before mentioned, when, on his calling at my entertainer’s house after dinner one evening, some gossip arose about a young lady of good family who had lately tried to elope with her lover.

‘Ah, her father has put her for six months in the house of the Good Pastor, in punishment,’ said the señor calmly.

He went on to explain, in answer to my questions, that the religious house in question was one of correction.

‘Don Luis placed his peccant wife there for a year. It is frequently done, if our wives and daughters should require it. Why! you think that the liberty of the individual should be protected by the laws of the State? But if women—especially the servant-maids in my house—are foolish, as their master it is my duty to place them in restraint for the good of their souls.’

And what of the poor men’s souls, one slily wondered. By all accounts, they stand far more sorely in need of such aid; for in each country of South

America I have visited, the same account was given me, by foreigners, of the native-born residents. The men in private life—even the priests—are for the most part corrupt to a degree that revolts the healthier-minded sons of temperate climes. The women, on the contrary, are good-tempered wives, devoted mothers, and console themselves for their vacant lives—as contrasted with the many occupations of their European sisters—by daily and frequent church-going. Except in a few exceptional cases, their detractors can only say that they are lazy, indulge excessively in sweets, grow too fat, and age early.

DAILY LIFE IN MIRAFLORES.

Now, shall I describe our life in Miraflores for one day among many happy ones? It is in small daily matters that customs in Peru struck me as so varied from the jog-trot of comfortable routine at home. To begin, then, with this day of small things.

Waking about seven, one looks with sleepy gratitude at the mosquito-curtains, which have repelled many blood-thirsty attacks throughout the night, as the sound of tiny trumpets in the dark gave warning. Tea is now brought in by Gubbins, the maid, who is black, but smiling. Of pure negro blood, she comes from Chala, on the coast—a handful of wooden houses under barren cliffs, which she fondly describes as ‘Such a nice place, missus!’ Probably her ancestors were brought to Peru from Jamaica, where they had adopted some owner’s name, as the Chinese do here with any popular master. For instance, there are yellow-skinned Cannevaros by the hundred. Speaking Spanish or English apparently indifferently, Gubbins gently

apologizes because the water for my bath will not reach the house till eight o'clock. The village *aguador*, or water-carrier, is still probably at the spring near the sea ; but he will come riding leisurely up the *bajada*, or hollow lane, followed by his troop of eight or ten small donkeys, each laden with a couple of water-barrels.

Windows are closed here at nights, for the heavy mists give tertianus. But now it is delicious to let in the fresh air laden with jessamine scent from the garden, where earth and flowers are all wet, though no shower has fallen. Then, after some morning occupation, follows a solid breakfast at 10.30 or 11.

At breakfast we begin with either maize porridge and milk, or the excellent orange-hued soup made of *camerones*, that is crayfish from the rivers, and thickened with cheese, eggs, and potatoes.

Next, there is no more delicious salad-fruit on earth than the *paltas* here—elsewhere called ‘alligator,’ or *avocado* pears—which are soft as cream-cheese, and nutty-flavoured, only surpassed by those at Guayaquil higher up on the coast. The fried fish, cutlets, claret, and coffee, which appear afterwards, are world-wide fare. Not so the fruits, for which Peru is famous.

At dessert, we enjoy *chirimoyos*, or custard-apples, large and curd-like of flesh, with black seeds, and a subtle tropical flavour that may vary, yet to my mind distinguishes all the fruits in the hot lands

where the sun penetrates the earth deep, and for long months, with its vivifying rays. Better still is the yellow *granadilla*, a species of passion-flower fruit. One slices off its tip, when the luscious green pulp and seeds are best eaten egg-fashion with a spoon. The native manner is to skin the *granadilla*, then gulp down the adhesive centre entire ; but this sight disagreeably reminded me of a snake trying to swallow a frog. The dessert is completed by bananas, guavas, pineapples, pomegranates, loquats, with perhaps prickly pears—the latter insipid enough, to my thinking. And, lastly, a few strawberries are already ripe, as September is advancing.

In the opinion of Domingo (the *primero*, or first man-servant), we must yet have still some vacant places to fill, so he invariably places home-made guava jelly on the table before he leaves. Domingo is a negro, dashed with Chinese blood, although the latter imputation would grievously affront the honest, steady fellow, who is considered 'too good to last.' His *segundo*, or second-'boy' (Demetrio), is a *sierrano*, freshly brought from the hills, who was so home-sick after one month that he was sent back on a visit. But in his *pais* the youth presently recalled with longing the fleshpots of the plains, and returned cured to work well, and learn Spanish instead of *Quichua*. The latter seems the most universal dialect in all South America. It was perhaps spread in the Inca days ; and the poor Indians of Peru,

impressed as soldiers in times of stress, mostly only speak it.

General Caceres became formerly popular by speaking *Quichua* to his men in the hospitals during the late war. There is a well-known story illustrating the ignorance of the raw recruits then raised to withstand Chili, undrilled and unwilling. An Englishman found a wounded soldier near his door, and, after assisting him, asked on which side he was fighting. 'I don't know,' murmured the poor Indian; 'I think it is against *Señor Chile*.'

The press-gang was at work during my stay. Domingo had just bought off his younger brother, who was caught one day by the Government men, and told he must serve Caceres.

In describing the household of my friends, Juan, the Chinese cook, must be specially mentioned. This yellow gentleman daily arrived from Lima by the morning train, bringing a market basket of provisions. After cooking our breakfast, he never troubled himself to wash up even a plate, but strolled towards eleven o'clock up the village to the Chinese *pulperia*, which answers to our public-house. Here his fellow-cooks from neighbouring villas met and gambled with him, till evening shades warned them that dinners must be prepared. By eight Juan returned to town, where he probably gambled again till the small hours.

It is a lovely, if gray, morning, so let us stroll

down to the beach and inhale the sea-breeze, which seldom rises to disturb the still air in the high ground here. Just outside the house the lane dips, and to right and left, even to far away, not a grass-blade shows on the shingly soil; it is a miniature desert scene. For half a mile the *bajada* descends between walls of sea-washed pebbles and mud, which wise folk say was once the sea-beach, adding that this coast is still being slowly upheaved.

'You would hardly believe that many rills are trickling at some distance below this surface,' said Mrs. R.; 'but presently you shall see.'

And, as she spoke, we heard the sound of running water, where the lane dipped still lower, and saw maidenhair ferns embowering a spring gushing from the rock. The village *aguador* filled the foreground of the scene with his donkeys and water-barrels. Then as the slope grew steeper there came the sound of breaking rollers, a breath of brisk air, and between the rugged sides of a lofty natural gateway gleamed the Pacific blue. Wooden stairs led us down to the bathing-boxes under the high cliffs, which latter were no longer barren, but thickly clothed with ferns, that were sprayed unceasingly by water dropping in showers from overhanging ledges; while all around miniature cascades and falls leapt down silvery clear into the briny deep below. What a waste of Nature's wealth, when remembering the thirsting land that stretched above us!

Returned home, there was a light lunch ready for those who needed refreshment. Then the English clergyman from Lima arrived presently by train to call on me, and take my hostess and myself out for a country walk.

We went first up the village, where—though a week late—Miraflores was holding a joyous *fiesta* in honour of Santa Rosa of Lima, the prettiest of girl-saints, and the most popular in all saint-worshipping Peru. Little arches across the street were covered with roses and geraniums, violets and bougainvilleas, and fluttered gay with pink-spotted cotton flags, a dozen to the yard.

As heretics, we only peeped respectfully into the village church, that stood with its big doors wide open to-day. Outside it was buff-washed, and neatly surrounded by a grass plot planted with palms and plantains. Inside, the floor was clean-swept; new paper roses decked the side-chapels; the lace altar-cloths seemed freshly washed. A group of copper-hued strong men, Cholos all of them, stood by the porch, their heads bared and their faces beaming with honest pride. But when martial music sounded across the *plaza*, and the little procession appeared, carrying aloft a white image, while a Bishop in violet came behind, walking between the attendant priests—then excitement carried away the village crowd! A well-dressed young man beside me dropped on his knees in the dust, smiting his breast; while women

pressed forward to fling white rose-leaves to the saint. They cried, they laughed! And so genuine was their emotion that one's own tears partly rose in sympathy, responsive to the magnetic thrill which bids us feel with our fellow-beings, our brothers and sisters.

Leaving the village, we struck out across fields of poor pasture. Some grew lucerne; others, apparently, crops of stones, that in places were deep as a shingle beach, and all worn smooth by the sea ages ago. Near the village small orange lilies had newly sprung up; further afield bushes of broom waved yellow, and a small brown-blossomed weed was not unlike a wall-flower. But it was winter time still, albeit my hopeful companions declared the landscape was already taking on a faint spring green. Certainly one or two of the toy hills near Lima were vividly emerald as a Swiss Alp in patches, though several of their brethren were yet an arid brown.

'What a good paper-chase country!' exclaimed our guide as we climbed the enclosing low mud-walls, finding toe-hold halfway, for they were mostly built but 'two-boxes high.' The manner of raising these adobe walls by stamping mud in a wooden case I have already described, as seen in Chili. Our goal was a large Inca *huaca*, which rose across the flat fields in a high serpentine mound, brown and bare. Hitherto, my inquiries concerning its history had received conflicting replies. One called it a burial-

place; another said it was a treasure-house more likely, which the Peruvian Government was too lazy to dig for, while refusing foreigners the permission to explore. One Peruvian even declared that folk of old lived on such raised mounds to be above the risk of ague and fever; a second believed they were signal-posts in times of danger; both holding gallantly to their original ideas. It was characteristic that neither had ever taken the trouble to inquire concerning a landmark visible from their windows, and plainly a relic of the ancient history of their country.

Our cicerone, Mr. C., had, however, found for me a description of this Juliana *huaca* in 'Two Years in Peru,' by Mr. T. Hutchinson. The latter says this *huaca* at its highest point measures ninety-five feet, with an average width of fifty-five yards and a total length of twenty-eight yards. The mound is surrounded by a double wall, giving an enclosure of about seventeen acres. He adds: 'An old man told me this was the burying-place of Ocharan, a district in which the chief *cacique*, named Pacullar, was the governing power long before the days of Cuyo Mancu. How this Solomon came by his knowledge I cannot tell.'

We climbed the *huaca* by a track near which were many holes, where no doubt treasure-hunters had dug, and whence adobe bricks protruded to the summit. Were there single large chambers in the interior, or honeycomb ones superimposed? one wondered.

Evidently the whole had been roofed thickly with mud mixed with smooth, water-worn pebbles and stones, now rolling loose. From the summit we could see far over the plain, chequered in patches of brown and dull green. Southward on the coast rose the Morro, or sea-hill of Chorillos, which word *morro* used on this coast reminded me of our Irish term *murragh* for sea-downs; while north stretched the low land-spit of Callao, with San Lorenzo Island prominent in the bay.

Now we descended, meaning to visit a farmstead below that was enclosed by very high mud-brick walls, ornamented in zigzag pattern on the top by loose tiles leaning against each other. In the distance gleamed a pool among bamboos; but our wide road was literally ankle-deep in dust, or, rather, powdery earth, even when we entered the high *hacienda* gateway.

To rightly realize my impression of a Peruvian farm, one should first, by way of contrast, call before the mental vision some English yeoman's home, with its dwelling-house and trees, ricks, buildings and garden, all pleasant to the eye and comfortable to live in.

Now look on this other picture.

In front spread a wide *hacienda* yard, desolate, but for one fowl and a distant pair of oxen. The proprietor's flat-roofed house occupied one side of the square; as the family only lived here in the summer,

it was closed, dreary, and the ugly wooden corridor outside lacked paint. To the left rose a buff-washed chapel, slightly larger than some neighbouring sheds that housed bullock carts, begrimed with dust and dirt. On the right side only were signs of life. Through a crazy door ajar we caught a glimpse of an enclosure where the labourers were housed, as is usual on Peruvian estates. Here a row of wretched doors were set so close in a low, long wall that each family could only own one small room, perhaps with a partition. Some very miserable urchins, mostly black, were playing listlessly near. One little negro girl of five limped towards us with her foot bound up in rags, having been stung by a *pique* in the fields. This is the jigger of the West Indies, an insect like a tiny flea, which will bore through any boot, and if not extracted with a needle, after which a drop of kerosene should be applied to the foot, it will leave an egg-bag, that causes great swelling and pain. *Piques* abound here in ploughed fields, stables, even in gardens if manured; and we were lucky to return this day foot-whole. One of our party gave the child a small silver coin, at which she stared and crept away.

As my friends knew the farm, they proposed a rest in the small store, that also serves as public-house, and which is attached to all estates. No Irish hovel could be more dirty, with its mud floor and smoke-blackened walls. The store-keeper came from behind a small counter to dust a rough-hewn

bench in welcome. He told us there were few horses or bullocks on the premises, but some fifty cows.

'*Fifty-one!*' said a hollow voice, apparently from the ground.

We three started. In a dark corner we dimly discerned what seemed a heap of rags flung down on a log.

'He is a negro with a pain in his head,' grinned the barman meaningly.

We were not loath to leave the shop, with its miserable bottles and grimy prints of saints on the walls. But we had not gone far on the highroad, when a negress ran after us with eager gestures displaying a silver coin, and calling out, 'O, señoras, señor! Which of you may I thank for such kindness to my child? Where do you live? May God repay you! Oh, what goodness!' Her blessings filled the air till we turned the corner of a long lane, stretching ahead in grotesque curves. Its walls resembled two gigantic, elongated earthworms defining a dust-track so sinuously that when slain by a Peruvian St. George they apparently died in parallel death wriggles. At least, their curves varied the horrid sameness of the lane, and protected us from some fierce milch-kine that glared and sniffed, as became the mothers of fighting bulls. Presently we climbed a high gate into a field of maize, where was a pleasing home-sight—that of our own trefoil-leaved milkwort thriving underfoot. Here were great fissures,

stretching from far inland to the coast-cliffs—some were new cracks, others green in their depths, whence came the tinkle of tiny brooks. Soon we regained the stony descent by the village, and heard the popping of revolvers, for practising shooting is a favourite amusement in Peru on feast-days. Lastly, we were greeted by home and the tea-table.

Two pretty girls, who strolled in, now told us their mother had been stung the day before by a yellow house-scorpion, but little larger than a cockroach, and was suffering from its effects. Better known insects than these, or jiggers, are still worse hourly plagues in Peru; as I already knew, being bitten almost to fever-point. My friends consolingly explained that whereas mosquitoes are only maddening in summer-time, fleas are like the poor—always present. They declared that even the rough Chilian soldiers suffered tortures from them, and hailed being marched up the mountains, where their persecutors dwindled. Later on, I was shown in the markets small pieces of rough yellow baize which are sold as traps in which the lively foe is entangled to destruction.

After dinner this evening we were bidden to a glee-meeting at a British neighbour's quinta. In the soft, misty darkness, it needed care to avoid stepping into the deep *acequias*, so a boy and lamp preceded us. The bungalow, with its railed front-garden, was like that already described, but for the Peruvian detail of two looking-glasses and a hat-rack being

hung in the open-air corridor. Also I admired the silken costume of Ah-Sin, the Chinese butler, who handed tea with his long pig-tail down. (This ornament is rolled up by the Chinaman when he wears European workaday clothes.)

It was a pleasant evening, and if the English and Americans are few, they are all the more sociable in Peru. We sang, looked at silver curios or carved cocoanuts, and at photos taken by a guest lately come down on a brief holiday from a great silver-mine high among the mountains. And with the good-byes ending a pleasant day, this description of Miraflores village and Peruvian life might also end—but that one touch remains to be added.

On our return, Gubbins, the black maid, was found still out of bed, and sobbing bitterly. She had asked leave to attend a revival meeting held by barefooted friars, who every four or five years make it their mission to visit and stir up the lazy, and often careless-living, priests and their flocks.

‘Oh, missus, the friars say the devil is going about in Miraflores; and I do feel so wicked!’

It appeared the friars could show just cause for their wrath. All the week they had been busy christening even big children, or marrying couples who had for years omitted this rite.

Next day we saw a gaunt, gray brother, cowed and sandalled, striding trainwards, while a fat, red-faced *cura* in black trotted after him panting, with features full of deprecation.

*SANTA ROSA OF LIMA, AND HER
NATIVE CITY.*

AUGUST the 30th was the birthday of Santa Rosa de Lima, one of the most famous of girl-saints, who is, indeed, without a rival for popularity in her native Peru ; it was also that of a much lesser personage, the chronicler. Both facts pointed out a holiday as fitting ; besides, on such a great feast-day every shop and office in Lima would be closed, and all the world in the streets.

So, on a lovely morning, we arrived in Lima, the capital, from our village home of Miraflores, bound on a long day's sight-seeing. Being a quartette, we filled a street vehicle that jolted us first to admire the Dos de Mayo *plaza* and monument. This last is a fine column made in France, crowned by a gilt aerial figure, and supported by colossal statues representing Chili, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia. It was erected in memory of May 2, 1866, when Spain made her last effort to interfere with the South American republics, and was successfully repulsed.

‘What vandalism!’ suddenly lamented one gentleman of our party. ‘They have fresh painted the statues and bas-reliefs in honour of Santa Rosa—painted the bronzes dark-green!’ And, for some time, he could not be comforted.

Next we paid our respects to a church built over the youthful Rosa’s home, wherein she used to aggravate her commonplace parents into sinful tempers with her pietism. She would go to a ball weeping, and fasten her famous wreath of roses on her head with sharp pins, to mortify vanity. She padlocked an iron belt secretly round her waist, and dropped the key down the deep house well (into which we respectfully peered).

At last her spiritual directors explained that the supposed goose was a swan, the difficult daughter a budding saint. So she was allowed to enter a convent to her own satisfaction, besides, perhaps, that of everybody else. And Lima glories yearly in memory of the pretty girl, whose melting eyes and rosebud mouth were rapturously extolled by old priestly chroniclers.

There was naught to see in the church but a dense crowd of black-robed praying women, a galaxy of tapers and roses—roses everywhere—of pink or white paper. But, in the afternoon, the saint’s bones were carried in procession round the *plaza* of the Cathedral, and from the balcony of the English club close by we saw this festal sight.

There were rows and rows of different monks, black, white, and gray ; acolytes with silver censers ; an image in black velvet, gilt-spangled ; the white-robed Archbishop with his mitre, and two Bishops in violet, while a swarthy crowd filled the *plaza*, and military music filled our ears. One felt sorry for the old Archbishop, as with slow steps he painfully approached over the rough pavement. Behind, the saint's poor bones were borne in a shrine—quite a cheerful sight, for the chest was covered with pink calico and muslin exactly like an old-fashioned dressing-table. It was amusing to watch the military guard of honour which followed. Indian-faced soldiers were stolidly marking time as the procession constantly halted, while the gray-haired, fierce-mustachioed officers with drawn swords must, one fancied, have felt somewhat bored—unless they amused themselves by picturing the shy surprise with which in life the fair nun would have viewed them escorting her.

But all classes and professions honour Santa Rosa. The President and Ministers did not attend this year officially. ' Perhaps too dangerous,' folks whispered. Deputies and Senators, however, and all the gentry of Lima, followed bareheaded round the great *plaza* and streets.

After the procession had passed by the doors of the deserted Cathedral, closed to services because in a dangerous state of disrepair, we went to visit the

old pile. Truly, it was a pitiful spectacle. Here were wide walls, a noble nave, lofty pillars, and everywhere a deserted stillness. One's eyes were satisfied with the proportions of this, the oldest church in South America, which might still be a fine monument of the old Spanish conquerors. But, looking up, a light shower of plaster-dust fell on us. The floor was covered with *débris*, for the old roof of cane and mud was visibly cracking, and even showed daylight in places.

It is popularly believed that the great high altar of Lima Cathedral is still of solid silver, yet folk whisper that some of its pillars are supposed to have been stolen and replaced by wood, covered with tinsel paper. Pity, that what remains should not be sold to defray the expenses of a new roof, and so preserve this historic edifice!

In the choir we seemed transported half across the round world to some Spanish or Italian minster, with its dark carved stalls, miserere seats to entrap any nodding monkish brother, and Apostolic figures. But, alas, the pavement!—it was strewn thick with dirt and plaster. Close by, a pile of huge and ancient chant-books was stacked on the bare stones. Opening one of these, to admire the illuminated letters, suddenly we dislodged a shower of 'matter in the wrong place'; while nearhand a silver altar was shorn of its adorning roses as high as impious hands could reach, even by climbing.

Around the aisles were side-chapels, feebly guarded by crazy, wooden-latticed gates. One chapel was disfigured by a glaringly-white monument set in the wall, representing a coffin, but with a glass side.

'Look in, señoras. Here is the embalmed body of Francis Pizarro,' announced the verger.

And, striking a match, he held it close to the pane, displaying a dark, grinning skull laid on a red cushion, and a shrunken, coffee-coloured *thing*—a horrible caricature of the human shape, not unlike a blackened doll, with cotton-wool protruding from its interior. Against one thigh-bone was propped a vulgar spirits bottle, in which some shapeless horrors could be dimly seen. *That* is all that remains of the cruel conqueror's heart and brain.

What a sermon was this gruesome sight! And one may moralize and wonder on the misery that poor Peru has known ever since this once living man first appeared on the coast with his cavaliers to destroy the religion of the sun, and to preach Christ's Gospel of love by means of fire, torture, and sword. Well might one or two Spanish chroniclers of the conquest exclaim, as godfearing men, 'Truly, Spain will suffer for these wicked deeds!'

There is a superstition in Chili that any persons who have been reared on goats' milk (as often happens) will turn out wild and unsettled in life. Francis Pizarro, so legend says, was suckled by a sow, and some evil influence on his character from

such fostering was apparently inferred by the tradition.

We gladly hurried away to inspect a supposed Murillo in another chapel. It was properly a Descent from the Cross, but the Christ's figure alone was covered with glass, so dirty it was almost impossible to discern the painting. Beyond this frame protruded the rest of the canvas, showing cherubs that will soon, probably, be utterly destroyed. As a parting favour, we were led into the large sacristy, where crimson priestly vestments were lying on the great wooden chests, betokening the unusual stir of this *fiesta*.

'Behold the twelve Apostles, señorita!' blandly observed our guide, pointing out a row of bas-relief figures on the high-panelled wainscot.

'Quite so; only there are surely *fourteen*!' was my polite comment, after a momentary puzzle over the unusual crowd.

'Ah, *si*! They have with them St. Joseph and another for company,' replied the verger in a jovial tone, as who should say, 'Would you deny them a guest now and again?'

His ready answer recalled the old story of an Irish jarvey poking fun at an English tourist he was driving round Dublin.

'See, your honour, that is the post-office, with the twelve Apostles standing round it.'

'Twelve! Why, man, there are only eight!'

‘Ah!’ returned Pat, ‘shure, the other four is inside sorting the epistles.’

To see more Lima sights we drove over the nearly dry Rimac River by a sixteenth-century bridge, with stone seats in its jutting-out angles. On the further side was a pretty little *alameda*—just a long enclosed walk lined by trees, shrubs, and statues. Some of the flowers here I had never seen elsewhere; in especial a tree with a creamy blossom like a large dandelion seed-ball; a ‘clock,’ as children say, blowing it to guess the hour. This quiet *paseo*, or walk, led to the church of the Franciscan friars, called Descalzos (Barefeet) where we ladies were not permitted to view more than a crowd of some twenty beggars sitting at the gate with tin mugs, waiting till noon struck, when they would be fed. Only men may see the cloisters—naught else—in this and other Lima monasteries, for the discipline on this point is austere, though lax to an almost incredible degree in other details—so, at least, I was told.

Presently we passed a large building, now a brewery, but once the house of La Perichola, the native-born mistress of the Viceroy Amat in the last century, and yet more known as the heroine of Offenbach’s opera. Strange tales are still told of the imperious Peruvian’s whims, and the devotion with which the old Spaniard gratified them. When he took the sea-air at Miraflores, she horrified the aristocracy by riding in his escort astride of her

horse—as the Chola women, of whom she was one, still do nowadays—wearing a hat with gay plumes. He lavished riches on her ; diverted a town canal to water her garden. Nevertheless, on returning to Spain at the age of eighty, he deserted his half-Indian love, and married his own niece. The Perichola thereupon gave herself up to good works, and died blessed by the Church, leaving a name honoured by her grandchildren.

We next went towards the bull-ring, passing the remains of an old city gateway, its high wall pierced as with portholes. In the absence of all other pretensions to architecture in Peru, these few Spanish buildings seem striking. Beyond was a very poor quarter, yet interesting, because every door stood open, and cooking went on either at the threshold, or in the street, over a brasier. As in Chili, so food is cheap, good, and plentiful in Peru. Most dishes were of maize or eggs, and all floated in an orange gravy, coloured by the *aji* of the west coast, a mild and fragrant pepper. At many corners, tables of refreshments were set out with plates of bread and sausage, slices of melon, or meat pies, all looking clean and appetizing. Other tables were covered with the very biggest glasses ever seen, brimming with *chicha*. And in honour of Santa Rosa, boys amused themselves, wherever a group was gathered, by thrusting a small doll under the people's noses, inviting them to kiss the image—price a penny !

Of all the dilapidated wooden structures I have ever seen, the great *plaza de toros* of Lima most needed paint and nails. Bull-fights were not held during my stay, as it was winter in Peru, but by all accounts, though people are passionately fond of the spectacle, this is a less cruel one than in Spain. No horses are killed, though six or seven bulls may be despatched in one day. Yet the matadors can hardly be dexterous, for an eye-witness told us that he saw one poor beast plunging round with three swords sticking in its neck, until a fourth weapon touched the vulnerable spot.

Several accounts were given me of a horrid fight got up about a year or so ago here, between a circus lion and a specially fierce little bull, whose owner backed him heavily. Lest the beasts should avoid each other in the wide arena, a large cage was built in the centre, into which both combatants were forced. One spectator told me that the lion was timid, and crouched beside the bars. The bull, too, showed no wish to fight, till a red flag was waved behind the lion. At that he grew angry, and charged, but his horns were wide and got caught in the bars. The lion vainly tried to climb these last as a means of escape; then, brought to bay, seized his opponent by the muzzle till the bull was nearly suffocated. Rousing all his might, the latter thereupon trampled the lion's side, breaking a rib.

'One could hear the lion groan, as the wind was

knocked out of him. It was horrible!' said the disgusted narrator.

In the end both animals were allowed to get free, as they only sought to avoid each other; but the mortally injured bull had to be destroyed, while the lion was sorely hurt.

Returning into fashionable Lima, we passed by the Chamber of Deputies, and, although sympathizing with the poverty of Peru, it was impossible not to smile at the comical exterior of this public building. It was a one-storied edifice, painted chocolate colour, with a crazy balustrade protecting its flat roof, and a slovenly sentry guarding wooden doors hardly good enough for a coach-house. Through a wicket-hole one caught a glimpse of some straggling flowers in the *patio*.

The Chamber of Senators, in the adjoining side of the *plaza*, was a great improvement on its fellow Assembly-house. True, we were led, on entering this, through shabby small rooms disfigured by matchwood partition walls covered with hideous paper. Yet the richly-carved old doors, the wainscot ceilings overhead, showed that some noble Spanish *salas* had existed here in the days of the Inquisition; for this very spot was where the Jesuits held their dreaded courts.

Next, we entered the ancient hall of the Inquisition, now the Senate-chamber. At last here was a noble sixteenth-century room, neither maltreated,

modernized, nor suffered to fall into decay : the only such remaining memorial in all Peru of the men who—whatever their crimes—suffered incredible hardships with fortitude, and displayed a valour and perseverance almost unrivalled in the world's history. The rich, dark-pannelled ceilings and walls were all carved, though only in bas-relief ; while the doors were deeply ornamented in wheels and circles. In one of these latter a small hole was cut to evil purpose, for the witness against any victim being tried before the tribunal of the Inquisition stood outside, and spoke through the door, so that the prisoner should not recognise his enemy.

But instead of calling up the old-world scenes of tragedy and suffering that these walls witnessed, the present comfortable and easy aspect of the senators' chamber deserves a word or two. Down the noble hall from the President's raised tribune stretched a crimson carpet, on which two rows of armchairs were ranged, *with as many spittoons between them !* My first rapid idea was that the senators were given precautions in case of sea-sickness ; for the impression was like that of a Channel-steamer cabin in windy weather.

Our attention was specially directed to the life-size portrait on the walls of 'the good President, Pardo,' shot dead in the *patio* outside, by a soldier who imagined that he owed Government a grudge.

A list of Presidents of the Republic who have died

violent deaths in Peru would be instructive. Other republics might supplement it. Then, in a dispassionate spirit, one could consider whether men really suppose themselves happier under this form of government than others. Certainly, in South America republicanism has almost lost a sense of public spirit, except in Chili. Bloodshed, insurrections, unceasing struggles to seize power and the public purse, sadden the minds of both patriots and strangers. In my short journey round the southern continent, Brazil, where we first touched, was in the throes of civil war. Calling next at Monte Video, we heard that fighting over the Uruguayan elections kept most men lively—if killing others. The Argentine Republic was quiet, certainly, during my autumn visit; but, a few weeks later, there came a rising of the troops in the South. Chili alone was peaceful; progressive; eager in self-improvement. Here in Peru—as before described—there was civil war just begun, which swelled early in the next year to a disastrous loss of life when Lima was captured. Further North, Ecuador surprised me as it has other passing ocean visitors by its record of peace and prosperity. Quite an unusual energy for these climates is shown by the little men, called ‘monkeys,’ of Guayaquil, at which port we spent a hot tropical day. ‘It is because the Presidentship is a family affair, and so the Government is not disturbed,’ I was told. Poor Ecuador! a few months later, and

some small paragraphs in European papers showed that it also was in trouble. Lastly, on staying at Panama as guest of the British Consul, before passing through the isthmus, the Colombian President's funeral was being celebrated. Though internal dissensions did not arise, there was at least an alarmed apprehension of them.

To return to the picture of Pardo. Although only presiding over the Senate when murdered, he had before filled the post of President of Peru, being the only one unanimously elected by the whole country—rich and poor. This a Peruvian friend told me, and many voices added their praises of the dead man, as the one, only, single-minded gentleman, well born and bred, cultured and honourable, who had as yet ruled this land. Alas! that such men should be so rare.

'He was assassinated because he was too honest,' was the mournful elegy uttered by several of his countrymen.

Before ending my description of sights in Lima, it is pleasant to give unstinted admiration to one, at least, and that is the Pantheon. One afternoon a small party of us devoted two hours to driving thither outside the town, and visiting its grounds, which proved a well-spent time. The French naval officers of the Pacific fleet, whom I met several times, had also praised it in glowing terms, with surprise. And certainly, of all the 'God's acres' I

have yet seen, this one is the fairest. As a septuagenarian Peruvian said to me :

‘It is not sad to think of being taken to so pretty a place, is it?’

After passing a mill, famous for four life-size marble statues adorning niches in its walls—lone surviving relics of former commercial greatness—we arrived at the cemetery walls, and stopped outside a handsome chapel. Just then, on the wide brown road, a wretched horse staggered under its rider, stood still in spite of whip and spur, then fell. With aching hearts we watched it cruelly flogged, but it did not stir. An hour later, it lay there dying, saddle and bridle gone, while a row of hideous turkey-buzzards waited near.

The chapel hall was round, with a beautiful statue of a recumbent Christ in the centre. By this all funerals pass, and the mourners, raising their eyes, are comforted by the touching love expressed in those marble features, and take hope, remembering that He went first the unknown road by which their dear dead have followed, and that He rose again and lives. So the processions wind down by steps into the garden, where a crowd of monuments, often like tiny chapels, are embowered with roses, ivy, and blossoming trees, while the mountains rising near form an encircling background that should raise one’s thoughts, as their peaks aspire, heavenward. There were some really fine statues among the flowering

plots allotted to the richer families, and all was in exquisite order. The poor are housed above-ground. To right and left, broad low walls diverged in geometrical pattern, pierced with apertures to receive one coffin lengthwise. These resting-places may be either bought entirely, or leased for fifty years. As each is occupied it is closed in with a memorial stone, and all are lettered and numbered, so as to make search easy. Nor were their humbler graves wanting in flowering shrubs near and evergreens, signs of living and loving care.

Yea, verily ; it was a pleasant place.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS IN THE LAND OF
THE SUN.

AFTER leaving letters of introduction at the British Legation and on Mr. Clinton Dawkins (then representative of the Peruvian Corporation of Bondholders) and his wife, I was several times kindly invited by the latter to their charming home.

On one afternoon visit we made an inspection of the house, as a typical Peruvian one, for my benefit. Entering the *patio*, and mounting by a marble stair to the *alto* above, here were a suite of handsome rooms, in which the wealthy—mainly British bondholders—expect their representative to entertain especially Peruvians, though a delightful hospitality was extended to French and English naval officers, as to passing strangers like myself.

The rooms of the family surrounded one court, those of the servants a second one. From this last we mounted a wide ladder to the flat roof, past chicken-coops, pigeons, beehives, and some flowers. Here was a wide view of church-spires and over

neighbouring roofs ; these last useful for drying linen, taking the evening air, and still more important as a means of escape, lately used by neighbouring politicians when an excited mob, filling the streets below, were seeking for their opponents. My hostess told me that once her own household was ready for flight also across these roofs, when the ignorant populace clamoured that the foreign bondholders were draining Peru of money. They could not understand that Peru had twice raised large loans in Europe to build railways and develop her great natural riches, and that the (mainly British) lenders naturally desired to receive interest from the borrowers.

This, after the Chilian invasion and the ruin of Peru, necessitated making special terms with the Government ; which terms the Corporation entrusted their agent from England to see duly carried out.

The aforesaid roofs are made first of wood, then cane, lastly of dried mud layered thickly above. On the rare times when it has really rained in Peru, the result in the houses became disastrous beyond words ; every available vessel, from a sponge-bath to a saucer, being needed below the leakages. Once, when the sky actually thundered as well, all the poor population sank on their knees in terror, believing the unknown sound must be the Last Day's trumpet !

Later on, when staying in the country, I was invited by Mrs. Dawkins to dine, and go on to a dance at

the French Legation, given in honour of a French flagship. As the Commandant and his officers were dining at the Peruvian Corporation, French speech was 'the order of the evening ;' and several Peruvian gentlemen present spoke it and English remarkably well.

Before leaving for the ball, our host showed us a collection of curios, picked up during the journeys inland that were necessitated by his post. Here were costumes of the poor Indians from the vast districts beyond the Cordilleras, watered by the mighty Amazon and its tributary rivers. A chief's head-gear was a band of wood-shaving and one upright feather ; his robes, four strings of dried nuts and monkeys' teeth, with an apron of parrots' plumage. Glorious blue butterflies came from the interior also. But the absence of animal life in the great woods is remarkable, so say all travellers. One acquaintance told me that, during a week's ride to the new coffee plantations of Perené, he only saw one wild creature, a monkey. We were invited to guess the nature of some flat objects on the wall, made of thick black felt, and crossed by silver lace. One, more gaudy than its fellows, was like a silvered tea-tray with a bulge in the middle. 'Some kind of platter,' unhesitatingly declared the Gallic flag-lieutenant, rushing into the breach. It was difficult to believe that these weighty things were navvies' ordinary hats, worn at Cuzco under blazing sun during hard work.

The silvered one, however, was that of a chief, and with further surprise we learnt it was worn balanced on the head with the concave side up.

Of course, conversation in this half-European gathering was not the solemn affair it generally is at a Peruvian lady's day 'at home,' to some of which I was invited.

To begin with, the guests range themselves in a circle round the hostess, in the very middle of a scantily-furnished room. A true Briton is debarred from our famous first topic on introduction, for the weather being invariably blazing in summer and drizzling in winter, it would seem idiotic to notice it. A Peruvian lady leads off the talk with her staple leading question to strangers, whom she presupposes married and with a family :

'How many children have you?'

One acquaintance of mine astonished her hostess by the simple reply :

'I have an only daughter.'

'What a short family!' ('Che corta familia!') was exclaimed in pitying tones.

'And how many have you, señora?' asked the Englishwoman in turn, as politeness in Peru demanded.

'I have ten children alive, *though nine are dead*,' replied the Peruvian lady, as calmly as if speaking of her poultry-yard or tame rabbits.

Ten, eleven, or twelve, are a mother's usual

quiverful in this prolific land. And foreigners vainly wonder how this young generation is to be provided for in a ruined country, where none work who can live without it, and girls would be deemed mad who tried to support themselves like their brave American or English sisters.

But it is when illness occurs—this I have on hearsay—that Peruvian manners are seen at their strangest ; that is, by foreign eyes. A rich Peruvian being ill lately, an English lady whom I knew found she was held to have sinned grievously against good taste by not going in person to offer her sympathy to his family. Hastening next day to repair this fault, she found the *sala* crowded with mute friends and acquaintances, sitting in rows round the walls. From time to time, deputations of these took it in turn to visit the sick man, whose malady demanded quiet and rest. This custom of attending on sick persons was carried yet farther in the case of a young girl, the daughter of a well-known politician. On an English diplomatist—who was unmarried and not yet of middle age—calling to leave his card, the mother of the young lady invited him to visit the invalid in her bedroom ; she seemed to interpret his unwillingness to intrude into either a lack of sympathy, or fear that the illness was contagious.

Our dance that evening proved diverting. Going upstairs from the *patio*, we found the Minister in one room, Madame Wagner in a second, the dancers

in a third. As some of our escort stopped to chat with their compatriot, a gentleman was rapidly caught to give me his arm, for Peruvian politeness would be shocked that two ladies should enter a ball-room with only one cavalier. Likewise, in Chili I have seen strangers offer their services for this ceremony, without afterwards presuming on acquaintance. My partner at once presented me to several of the principal ladies present ; though not leaving me time to exchange more than a sentence in Spanish with any one before carrying me off to another.

The Limeñan beauties were all present, mostly very plump young girls with lovely teeth, dark eyes, and fine hair. One foresaw how in a few years their figures would resemble the unwieldy outlines of their cheerful, ponderous mothers ; but meantime they smiled bewitchingly — and said nothing. The correct behaviour of a well-bred *niña* seemed to be a modest casting of the eyes downwards (which showed off their long lashes), and an everlasting smile ; the corners of her rosy, prim mouth being much helped by an upward dash of paint. Further, she should keep very still, and answer prettily, ' Yes ' or ' No.' This I judged from a recognized beauty at dinner, who was a ' social success,' and whose plump hands hardly ever uncrossed themselves, except when their owner ate a little, as if by stealth. Of course, the dancers were only very slightly *decolletés*, while the matrons were all *collets montés*. Our

English effrontery in baring necks and arms shocks the sensibilities of South Americans, who bear out the truism that the more profligate a man may be, the more particular he is as to the conduct of the women of his family.

Although our hosts were 'foreign,' they had somewhat conformed to the customs of the land. Therefore between the waltzes and lancers trays of 'bocks' were carried round, together with ices and quantities of sweets; and the beer was drunk no less freely than if we had been in Germany. As always in South America, any gentleman disinclined for exertion, who yet wished to honour a lady by inviting her to dance, offered his arm and proceeded to promenade with her round and round the room, among the whirling couples, till she was giddy or the music ended.

When midnight struck we adjourned to the dining-room, where tea and chocolate were dispensed at the table, all the ladies sitting close around, while the gentlemen behind handed them preserved fruit and sweet cakes; after which a cotillon followed. At smaller evening 'at homes' of Peruvian ladies, such as are given in *muy confianza* (much intimacy), the guests all sit in a circle; and every half-hour the servants enter with relays of sweetmeats, champagne, tea and cakes, beer and coffee. But everyone waits till, last of all, chocolate is brought after midnight. This is the signal for departure. A

French lady called these entertainments, when speaking of them to us, '*soirées aux petits gâteaux.*'

Peru is now, as was said to me by a speaker of consideration, 'ruined — played out — with no money left.' A brief account of the guerilla Civil War, which was going on during my visit, will show some of the causes why (unless readers skip it).

General Caceres, the President, had already filled this same post eight years before, being considered a good ruler, if dictatorial. When his term of power was about to end, Caceres pulled the wires so well that one of his own partisans was elected President to 'keep the seat warm.' This friend should naturally, on retiring, have done as much in turn for Caceres, instead of which he ungratefully died, and that on the very day before the elections.

Now, in such an event, it is the rule that the first Vice-President shall assume office. This the worthy man in question properly wished to do, when the second Vice-President improperly kicked him out. Upon this the first one hastily fled. The usurper then assumed the Presidentship, till, on being promptly threatened with assassination, while also, on his appearing at a theatre, the populace showed signs of fury, he, too, preferred discretion to valour, and retired from the stage. The elections then duly showed Caceres first on the list, and he installed

himself in the President's palace. But he had not reckoned with Nicolas Piérola.

Piérola was also a former President—also wished to be the new President. So, pointing out with a patriot's virtuous indignation that the missing first Vice-President was legally the chief ruler, he called upon Peru to throw off the yoke of the usurper, Caceres. Having roused the ever ready 'other side,' he himself hastily took shelter in Chili, whence he stirred the fire of insurrection with a silver poker; for he had rich clients at his back, to whom he formerly gave loaves and fishes in the days of his power.

Events were in this state during my stay, no one knowing how numerous the *monteneros* really were. Small bands had appeared all over the country, while they mustered strongly enough to engage the Government troops only a few miles from Lima, in which action a good many were killed.*

My host at Miraflores, Mr. R., had an exciting experience of these guerilla gentry. Leaving his wife and myself for a few days, he went on business with a friend up the coast to the port of Salaverry. There, from the steamer's deck, a long line of mounted men, leading spare horses, could be seen descending the sandy heights, and forming a cordon round the little town. They were *monteneros*, for the glasses

* As has been already said, Piérola was victorious in a few months, and became President.

revealed that their uniforms were made of English sacking, probably looted somewhere from warehouses; while their horses were certainly 'requisitioned' from the unfortunate *hacienda*-owners on their line of march, whose cattle also suffered.

The spectacle was amusing, as our friends watched the town captured. But presently large boats piled with cotton bales, behind which gleamed gun-barrels, pushed out to attack the English steamer. The insurgents had forced some poor Italian boatmen, under threats of being shot, to row them, knowing that a few Peruvian soldiers, with a store of Government arms, were on board. As a shower of bullets swept over the deck, the English discreetly retired to comparative safety. So did the Peruvian soldiery. But the stewards and sailors, as Chilians—to whom any fight is keen joy—rushed for their pistols and *corvos* (curved knives), hoping the ship would be boarded. Dire was their disappointment when the British skipper weighed anchor, and the vessel swung out of reach, and headed towards the ocean, with a long shriek from the siren. The Chilians tore tablecloths from the saloon, waved them in derision, and yelled contempt as their pursuers' parting shots whistled round their ears.

Such incidents as this caused a slight excitement when told; but afterwards it was pitiful to see the resigned despair which filled men's minds as to the future of Peru. Caceres, although a brave soldier

and able President, was growing more unpopular every day, being accused of having robbed the country too freely. What if he did? *They all do!* was the apathetic reply of others. Each President in office is always hated by those who wish their own patrons to spend the public money in private largesse.

One instance, that happened to my own knowledge, will illustrate the shameless robbing done by men in power. Caceres, having no navy, for Chili had destroyed the Peruvian warships, wished to buy a steamer belonging to a foreign company.

'He means to escape on it, if pressed,' folks said. The vessel's price was agreed on—twenty-two thousand pounds. But this was swelled to forty thousand pounds by the bribes which the various Ministers demanded of the President, before they would give their seals to the documents required. One Minister asked for and received ten thousand pounds, so it was whispered on good authority!

Another talked-of incident was a fight on board the steamer plying on Lake Titicaca. This lake—the highest large one in the world, being situated at about 12,000 feet above the sea-level—is visited for health's sake by invalids suffering from chest complaints. Also many travellers along the Peruvian coast see it by leaving their steamer at Mollendo, and thence taking the train to Arequipa and La Paz.

This I, too, much wished to do, being only deterred by the rather lonely journey for a solitary unit—as

also by some talk of *monteneros*. Perhaps it was as well the plan was renounced ; for, at that same time, a fighting editor from Lima went on board the lake steamer with some friends, in disguise, and presently seized it in Piérola's name, imprisoning the crew. In turn the latter were freed by an English steward, and I think an Italian one, who by a clever ruse took the captors captive. Later on, a young German, my fellow-passenger to Panama, was still suffering from the results of a ball in his shoulder received in this fray. The editor was taken prisoner, and people said that Madam Caceres so hated him, because he had written articles reviling the *ex-cantinière's* unblushing sales of places, that, once lodged in prison, he was likely to have some quiet thumb-torture applied to him. Hearing this, I cried out in disbelief of such treatment being possible, but was assured on all sides that, though not practised openly, it is done in secret.

Certainly, the Lima prison seems arranged after the best European plans, with passages radiating from a central hall, where a grim warder sits like a spider in a net. Yet in this highly-praised institution the cold-water punishment has been shown often to visitors, with pride. A drop of water is made to fall regularly on the back of the culprit's neck, the agony in time being sufficient to cause madness. This is simply an old torture of the Inquisition.

A MORNING IN A SUGAR-MILL.

WHOEVER visits Peru should see its sugar-cane fields, the finest in the world, because of the misty yet rainless climate. Therefore one morning I duly started at 8.30 with some friends for Lima, and thence, still by rail, to the Ancon Valley.

So gray a morning as it was! For the last three weeks the sun had not once shone, yet we were in the heart of the tropics, and only twelve degrees from the Equator. True, it was still winter; though in Rio, which should be much colder, being further south, this month of September is extremely warm. The reason for the temperate climate of Peru is a cool wind, which, as the old Spanish conquerors noticed in their chronicles, always blows up and down this west coast; it also prevents the clouds of the Cordilleras from descending in rain, though, as Pizarro remarked, 'vapours' brooded in winter over the country lying between the mountains and the ocean. Leaving town, the route lay through orchards of *chirimoyas*, or custard apples, among which orange

nasturtiums were wreathed in wild luxuriance ; then came thickets of splendid bamboo, followed by brakes of wild cane, bearing aloft tall spikes flowering in a gray grass-pennon, whence its common name of *bandera* (flag).

The Ancon Valley is rich in pasture—that is, for Peru—and large herds of cattle were grazing over it as we passed close under the mountains that rose, one bright green, but its brother brown and stony, with the continual sharp contrast that strikes one at this season in Peru.

Soon the sight of a large sugar-cane field burst upon our eyes with a gladdening impression of the quick-coming spring, for the young yellow-green blades cheered the gray landscape with a sunlight hue. One caught a pleasant glimpse of a *hacienda*, a sugar-mill and farmhouse combined, with gay white and red walls. It had a garden and orchard close by ; beyond, a small line of rails from the fields carried trucks laden with chopped cane-stalks, like so many cabbage-sticks.

Our goal lay still further ahead, in a wider part of the valley. Here, alighting at a small solitary station, nothing met our eye but bamboo and scrub, through which two narrow tram-lines led respectively to two sugar-mills that lay beyond. Mr. Heaton, the manager of the nearest one, awaited us with a small car. The darky driver whipped up his mule, and we presently reached the mill of Puente Piedra, so called

from a small stone bridge, a rarity in Peru, where most country bridges are merely three logs covered by loose sods.

Work was in full swing, as we stopped under the mill walls. A line of trucks full of cane chopped to the length of bamboo walking-sticks, which they resembled, had just been drawn from a far field along the tram-lines; these last are easily moved wherever needed, the land being level. Cholo workmen were feeding a long trough that moved slowly and unceasingly upwards with its load of canes, disgorging them through a hole in the mill wall into the jaws of a greedy hidden monster. Entering the mill, we viewed the glutton with curiosity, for its heavy rollers were sucking in and bruising the most recalcitrant canes between close-set iron lips. Poor canes! they were like live things being swallowed by a cobra, their ends all a-quiver. Crushed and mangled, they disappeared; but a brownish thick stream poured continually into a well below, while a warm mass of broken fibre was as constantly being drawn away from the dragon on another circular trough, which emptied its load into a row of waiting carts. The yard outside was littered thick with this refuse spread to dry.

‘Then it is burnt in the furnaces; nothing is wasted here,’ said our cicerone, who was also a partner in the mill, and had invented most of its modern improvements.

As this gentleman kindly wrote me out later a description of the process of sugar-making (see p. 366), I will only give my own superficial impression of the scene.

The first transformation of the live cane-sap into that brown reluctant fluid, on its way to gladden mortals' lips, was to me the most wonderful of all. But the whole animated scene was curious. The large mill-space was all alive with whirring wheels ; full of pipes, boilers, and the grinning faces of pure negro workmen, swarthy native Cholos, and yellow-skinned Chinese. From the well the juice is forced by steam-pressure up yonder pipes to boilers under the roof ; so we climbed thither up high ladders, and crept along platforms, to peer into seething caldrons covered with foam, or scum. Again, peeping through a glass eyehole set in a huge vessel, one saw bright brown syrup within, thickening towards granulation. All day there sat a patient Chinese beside this, extracting from time to time a dab of fluid, which he examined on a glass plate through a magnifying lens, then thickened or thinned the syrup, according as the sugar was required to be coarse or fine-grained.

'All this delicate work is entrusted to Chinese ; we can only give natives, or negroes, the coarser labour,' said the manager, to my sincere pleasure, feeling sympathy for the oppressed state of these unhappy foreigners.

But the prettiest sight in all the building was the centrifugals. Few women understand machinery (in which respect the writer is very much a woman), but even the most uninitiated could not fail to admire these wonderful vertical boxes. It was the business of a negro to fill them with lumps of sticky molasses, broken up by a crowbar, when instantly the centrifugals whirled round with such swiftness, the eye could only perceive that they seemed to shiver. Inside, the molasses grew white—and whiter still. That was the sugar, which could not fall because revolving too rapidly. Meanwhile, the liquid portion of the molasses escaped through a lining of fine netting into a vessel below. The centrifugals stopped. Down dropped a shower of white sugar from all round their circular sides, which harvest two negroes deftly scooped up into wooden vessels that were immediately weighed.

After this we were shown a brown sugar drying-room, where the heat was tropical, and the warm sickly smell that pervaded all the mill seemed almost intolerable; but the sugar-heaps rivalled the finest sand-castles of one's youth. We were glad to be carried off to fresh air, and a mid-day breakfast in the manager's wooden hut by the stockade fence.

After the usual Peruvian *once* of white soup, veal cutlets, Chilian wine, and *avocado* pears, we sallied forth to inspect 'the town.' This term applies to the dwellings of the work-folk, mostly Chinese,

who live on the premises in every Peruvian *hacienda* (this word signifying any kind of estate).

It makes one heart-sick to hear of the cruelties practised only a few years ago on the unfortunate Chinese mill-hands in Peru. Engaged by a Chinese contractor to work, say, a year, on some estate, they were—and still are in the North—confined in a walled enclosure, and guarded at nights by sentries with loaded guns to prevent desertion. Now, gambling is the chief vice of the Chinaman, while honesty in keeping a bargain is his best virtue. The owners always reckoned rightly that in a few weeks the labourers would have lost so heavily at bones or dominoes—or have squandered any gains in the opium shop—that each man would come to beg an advance of pay for six months, or even a year. From that moment he was a slave! Never was his contract expired—never, till life ended, would his labour be done! The debtor was heavily chained, marched in and out to work daily in a gang with his equally unfortunate comrades; cruelly flogged. It is said here that a Chinaman will work or starve with scrupulous honesty to pay his gambling debts; still, after years of forced labour, the poor serf often felt his owners had been amply recompensed. Then, but one way remained to any such wretch of returning to his beloved native land—the gate of suicide!

One narrator told me how, to his personal know-

ledge, one man had been flogged every day before work for six months. At last one morning, passing the furnaces, he exclaimed, 'I'm off to Canton!' and leapt into the glowing interior. His fellow-slave, who was chained to him by the leg, was dragged by that death-spring to the furnace-door, and could not escape till the fire itself freed him. There were also terrible tales whispered of mutinies hatched; revenge taken on the owners; and their ten-times worse reprisals. But, nowadays, slavery is supposed to be forbidden by law; even a Chinese Commission has been appointed to watch over the condition of these descendants of exiles, who, degraded and despised in Peru, remain vainly loyal to their far-off native land.

The Puente Piedra 'town' was a model one. Rows of mud-plastered bamboo walls, thatched with light canes and sods, were pierced with many small and crazy doors set close together. Most were carefully locked, their owners being bachelors; but here and there some wretched-looking negresses, or Cholo wives (for no Chinese women ever emigrate), humbly beckoned us to peep into their dismal little homes. The village shop, or *tomba*, was kept by a bland, supple-mannered old Chinaman. In the darkness behind his dirty counter gleamed a tiny light in what seemed the interior of an oven. This was what we much wished to see. It was an opium-couch—just a raised divan, with coarse curtains, and

room enough for one poor dreamer to lie at peace and smoke himself into a fancied paradise. The old man rather shamefacedly showed us the opium-pipe, somewhat like a mandolin in shape. A dark pellet of the drug is stuck in the centre of the flat disc, where is a tiny orifice to draw up the smoke when a match is applied.

‘It does not degrade the men nearly so much as whisky-drinking,’ said more than one thoughtful British observer later to me, dispassionately.

Afterwards this village, with its blue gums planted before the doors, seemed a model of neatness compared with other Peruvian hovels, that were merely fit for turkey-buzzards to roost in.

Lastly, our host pointed to a large hillock of ashes, saying, ‘The only thing we do not use is there. We could make that into splendid compost for the land, and so give back all that is taken out of it; but, unfortunately, it stands in our agreement that all ashes are to be thrown away. We have tried hard for leave to alter the words, but in vain. Perhaps we might get it by paying double what the stuff is worth. It is a pity!’

As in all countries of decadence, law and lawsuits are terribly dear in Peru, and a favourite luxury; perhaps because of the welcome attendant excitement.

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE CENTRAL SUGAR FACTORY AT PUENTE PIEDRA.

As in Peru cane ripens *every month of the year*, grinding in the sugar-mills can be carried on unceasingly, and machinery is only stopped for repairs.

The cane is crushed between powerful rollers, and the juice strained through finely perforated copper plates. During its passage between these it is treated with sulphurous acid gas.

It is then rapidly heated to a degree too high to allow of fermentation, and when this heat is attained is run into a *mente-jus*.

When this vessel is full, steam is let into it, which, forming a pressure, forces the juice into an overhead tank, from whence it runs into vessels called 'defecators.' These defecators are hemispherical in form in the lower part, with straight sides. The inner part which comes in contact with the juice is made of copper, and particular care is taken to cleanse these portions thoroughly each time the vessels are emptied.

When a defecator is about half full, steam is turned on; so that very soon after the charge is complete, the liming-point has been reached—viz., 175° to 185° Fahrenheit, according to the state of the juice.

Finely sifted, fresh-slaked lime is then used, mixed with water, to neutralize the acidity of the juice.

This mixture is introduced when the juice is at such temperature as experience shows will give the best results, and all well stirred up. The heat is then continued till the juice is very close to, but not actually at, boiling-point. Steam is then shut off, and the contents are allowed to settle.

The clear liquor, when drawn off, is run into a skimming tank, where it is subjected to a brisk boiling for a few minutes only, while being skimmed at the same time.

This clean juice is then run into closed vessels and evaporated under a vacuum, the heat for which operation is supplied by the escaped steam from the different engines in the factory. From this apparatus the juice is pumped as a liquid of specific gravity of about 25° Baume into another tank, termed 'a clarifier,' which is fitted with a steam-coil. Here it is again boiled and skimmed during a very short time, and then run into settling tanks, where it is allowed to stay from one day till another.

If this syrup is likely to remain more than twenty-four hours, the density is made higher, so as to avoid, as far as possible, fermentation setting in.

From these settling tanks the syrup is drawn off quite clear and bright, and diverted into the 'strike pan.' Here, under a vacuum, it is boiled to form grain, the size of the grain being governed by the demand. Peruvian consumption requires small grain, whereas for export a large one is preferred.

The sugar, on being discharged from the 'vacuum pan,' is next brought into circular coolers, which are fitted with wheels to run on rails. These coolers have central tubes, which cause a current of air to pass through the hot mass, that then rapidly chills.

The cooler-car is then run over a sugar-mixer placed in a pit ; the central tube is removed, and the sugar (*masse-cuite*) shovelled down through the hole left by the removal of the central tube into the mixer, from whence it is raised by a special apparatus for that purpose, and charged into the centrifugals.

The baskets of these centrifugals are vertical, each centrifugal being provided with one shaft and two baskets. (It has been found that for making washed sugar this style of centrifugal does the work more thoroughly, and with less loss of the first product, than can be accomplished with the ordinary kind.)

The molasses from the first product is limed to neutral-point and brought to boiling-point only, continued boiling not being employed. It is then settled in the same manner as that described for syrups, cooked to grain in the vacuum pan, and cooled and spun in the centrifugals.

The molasses resulting from this second sugar is used for making third-class sugar or rum, as may be determined upon. All the washings are carefully collected, and with molasses and water are fermented and distilled.

The only fuel used in this factory is that supplied by the cane itself. Grinding is carried on by day only, the working hours being from six a.m. to six p.m., while one hour is allowed for breakfast. However, if necessary, work could be continued at night also.

A GREAT PERUVIAN HACIENDA.

IF the sugar-mill last described was interesting to see, even far more so was the sight of the wide fields of tall, waving canes—the monthly harvest of this land which should be so rich.

All the friends whom I met in Peru were most eager to show me, as a stranger and writer, what they thought worthy of description. Mr. St. John, our *chargé d'affaires*, among other kindnesses, introduced me at an evening party to the Señora Cannevaro, whose husband is chief proprietor of perhaps the second largest sugar-cane estate in the land. As we talked, this lady asked me, with all the sweetness of manner that is so pleasing in her countrywomen, what I still most wished to see during my stay.

‘An *hacienda* in the country,’ I replied.

‘You shall see ours at Caudivillia ; I will get up a party for you. We only live there in the summer, but we will go one day by train, and lunch at the house,’ was her prompt suggestion.

Unfortunately, this kind plan was marred by

illness in the family, just as the señora and her husband had taken some trouble, so I learnt from mutual friends, to arrange the pleasant excursion. Nevertheless, a long afternoon at Caudivillia is one of my most pleasing memories of Peruvian life, although the owners could not themselves show me their vast estate. This had recently been increased and formed into a company, of which the Cannevaro family, however, held most of the shares.

Leaving the Puente Piedra Station, before described, some friends and myself were met by a vehicle that much resembled a family omnibus. This was a neat tram-carriage, well-cushioned, yellow-painted, and drawn by a good mule, that carried us quickly down the vista of a narrow line, laid between cane brakes and great thickets of bamboo, into the Caudivillia property, twelve miles square. Each half-mile, or so, our road passed through gates set in mud-walls, dividing the square fields; the latter were of exactly equal size, so that the amount of canes therein could be precisely calculated.

A vivid crimson spot on an adobe wall now attracted even my short vision. It fluttered and flew off to a thistle, where it swung itself. This living gem was a small bird with flame-red head and breast, but the blackest and glossiest of wings and back. In country parlance, here, it is called a *tutupellin*. Afterwards we saw several more; but even one was enough to make the heart glad with its beauty.

After two miles of barren land, or swampy thicket, we reached a wide and dusty plaza, where were rows of mud dwellings for the Chinese labourers, and a large joss-house, shaded by some trees. Beyond rose the high walls of what resembled a square fort. This was the Caudivillia homestead.

Entering the gateway, we found a light-blue, two-storied house, belonging to Señor Cannevaro, on one side of the square. Next came a large old-fashioned crushing-mill. Opposite—as in pious Peru it should—stood the chapel for the family, attended also by the natives and negroes. Beside it a belfry arch led to the garden. There was also a house, which large letters on the walls set forth to be a ‘hotel for visitors’; near it a store to supply the workfolk; and, lastly, stables filled up the wide, strongly enclosed plaza.

The *administrador*, or manager, kindly showed us first over the mill; but this seemed less excellent in machinery than that of Puente Piedra, though three times as big. Again, the warm, sickly smell of the moist sugar oppressed us, yet for the sake of some fresh items of information we valiantly went round. *Aguardiente* was largely made here, and that, curiously, from the very dregs of the refuse stuff. This spirit, however, does not approach the excellence of the famous Jamaica rum.

It seemed odd that, in this land of sugar, the solid white squares used in Europe are considered a rare

dainty. They are sold as a sweetmeat, which friends send on festal days to each other. A maid carries a tray heaped with sugar lumps, and covered with a white cloth, edged with the coarse lace of the country. This last, with the tray, is invariably returned. I heard of an English lady, elsewhere in South America, keeping a small vase, in which a birthday bouquet had been sent her, till aware that she had grievously sinned against etiquette. The only sugar daily used in Peru is either brown or a soft white kind.

On visiting the high-walled and neatly-irrigated garden, one creeper seemed rare to me among those lately grown familiar. It bore a huge yellow flower, like a floripondio, but upright. The gardener called it a *sombre*, but, like even the best of his class in Peru, seemed utterly ignorant on the subject. My companions also had never seen it before, though residents here.

And now we were invited for a long drive through the cane-fields—the chief object of our visit. Away we started, of course on tram-lines, but our vehicle this time was merely a workman's car, though with cushions kindly placed on the benches in honour of the señoras. After wide cleared fields, where only hacked cane-stumps and forgotten brown leaves were left, the line plunged into an almost interminable perspective of dense, green, cane-jungle. The intermingling blades rose above our heads. Wild creatures, deer and such-like, lay close hidden in

the gloomy depths of the brakes, where little light or air can ever penetrate.

On and on! Our track grew indescribably monotonous, between the sheaves of great leaves that were like walls on either side. We hailed the interruption of some open ploughed land, wherein lay a large mound, the remains of an Inca village, that had never yet been dug open, we were told. As strangers and exploring *gringos*, our eyes glistened with yearning; and the manager courteously stopped the car.

‘Shall we go there? Only—think of the jiggers, ladies, in that fresh-turned earth!’

The name of these dreaded pests threw a cold douche on our ardour. Let us at least possess our feet in peace, free of such pertinacious, burrowing intruders.

‘Drive on, Cocktail,’ called out the *administrador*; and the Chinese driver lashed his mule from the footboard. ‘Ah, you smile at the name, señoras. It is a strange one. No? But all our Chinese have names so alike, it is impossible to distinguish them; so we generally give sobriquets of our own. Now, Cocktail, what is your real name? Ah Shin? Yes; they all begin with Ah.’

Presently the cantering mule neared a gate ahead, beside which lived the usual gate-keeper. Now, already I had noticed some of these said guardians emerging from lairs of reeds and sods, that appeared to be merely a noontide shelter. But this gate-

lodge gave me such a sharp surprise as still returns each time the scene rises in my memory.

The dwelling was like a large open-work lark's cage of bamboos, set down on the field, and lightly roofed with canes and rushes. Inside one of its two divisions, one distinctly perceived a swarthy woman in a cotton skirt and loose bodice, combing her black mane of coarse hair. And, quite appropriately, across the road, the owner of this airy abode—an old man—was busily making cane bird-cages. The lodge seemed a joke. For where was privacy or comfort in walls through which the winds could whistle, or a neighbour both see and thrust his hand? There seemed no furniture, either; save for a few coarse earthen dishes.

'Do they pass the day in there; in rain or sunshine?' was my naïve query.

'The day! They spend their lives there, night or day, winter or summer,' returned my equally surprised friends. 'That is the usual home of the hill-Indians, or *sierranos*. They are very hardy; and, as you perhaps have heard, it never rains in Peru, so why should they be cold?'

Why indeed? Except that the misty mountain air made me feel chilly, although warmly dressed, for we were nearly 3,000 feet above the sea. I shivered, fancying what it must be like in such a dwelling on a drizzling winter's night in July, with a wind from the hills. A Chilian *ramada*, a mere

booth of wattled myrtle-boughs, roofed with sods, is a snug nest, indeed, compared to a *sierrano's* cage in Peru.

After this our tram-lines ended by some farm-buildings on the verge of the estate. Here a tram-engine was puffing away, ready to start when its train of trucks should be loaded with cane.

A hundred yards distant a field of cane was half cut; the men slashing down the big plants with bill-hooks, others cutting off the tops and leaves, while women bound the sheaves, which were quickly piled on waiting waggons.

Once more my friends impressed upon me the twice-told tale, that Peru is the only country in the world where sugar-cane can be cut *all the year round*! It owes this immense advantage to the absence of rain. And, further—the plants being irrigated—no water is given them for three months before cutting, which causes the sap to be more saccharine. When, some weeks later, being in Jamaica on my homeward journey, I mentioned this fact to a sugar-planter friend, he would have torn his hair with envy, but that, as the negroes there say, he had ‘a *peel head*.’

‘How can we compete with that?’ he asked, apostrophizing the surrounding scene—a dell in the Blue Mountains. ‘Once you have seen those Peruvian sugar-estates, you may rest assured there is nothing like them anywhere in the world.’

Briefly, as to the process of planting the cane. This costs almost ten pounds an acre in English calculation, and for two years, till the plants have grown, there is no interest for the outlay. The ground is prepared by burning the old stumps, care being needed lest the adjoining standing canes should be fired also. Then the steam-plough, with its twin engines, turns up the soil thoroughly, after which short pieces of cane are laid slantwise in drills, so that more than one section has a chance to put out roots. After this the plants are left to grow, only needing irrigation ; also some light weeding by means of ox-ploughs. There are three cuttings of the same canes. The first harvest ; the next, when the roots have sprouted again to full height, which is called the *soka* ; and the third time, or *resoka*. Sometimes the soil is so good that a fourth cut can be made ; and there are even districts where the canes have never been replanted within living memory, though these produce but little juice.

Some especially succulent bits of cane were now carefully peeled for us to taste. Still, in spite of all one hears in its praise, sugar-cane seemed to me a dry morsel, indeed, compared with even the rudest sweets of one's childhood.

Alighting to inspect the tidy large farm, with its usual *tomba*, or store and bar combined, some more peasant huts in the outskirts attracted me. Peering *through* the house walls, one noticed some

more furniture—a stool or two, a bamboo bed-frame raised a few inches from the ground, some pots and plates. One woman lay fast asleep on a sack of straw laid on the mud floor. She wore her cotton gown, because—as was explained to me—she probably possessed no other garment but this one.

‘Do not pity them,’ said an English gentleman present. ‘The finest fisherfolk I know are some here in Peru, who live in just such a village. It is a real sight to see their little naked children running into the surf, and jumping on their tiny *caballitos* (little horses); so they call the small bundles of reeds they paddle through the waves, in imitation of their fathers, who use larger faggots as boats.’

It was growing chilly on these upland cane-fields as we returned. Then, with a glance at some of the handsomest ‘pacers’ ever seen, kept in loose-boxes with an open-air yard for each proud small steed, we took our leave, after being offered beer in refreshment, as usual in Peru. The tram-carriage lastly bore us swiftly away from Caudivillia, in time for the evening train to Lima.

GOOD-BYE TO PERU.

EVERYONE who intends to visit Peru of course reads Prescott's history of its conquest.

Everyone, equally, on arriving is surprised by the unanimity with which the residents in Peru assure newcomers that, though delightful, his picture of the wonderful civilization existing under the Incas' sway is exaggerated.

Nevertheless, what an old-world romance is the story of this governing caste! One fable asserts they were white-bearded men who came from the heights of Lake Titicaca, and brought new knowledge to the Indian dwellers in the lowlands. Another, more universally told, is that they descended from a wondrous brother and sister, Manco Capac and Mama Oello Huaco,* who likewise appeared one day on the shores of the same lake. They an-

* '*Capac* meant great or powerful. *Mama* with the Peruvians signified mother. The corresponding word *papa* with the ancient Mexicans denoted a priest of high rank.'—Prescott's 'History of the Conquest of Peru.'

nounced themselves to be Children of the Sun, who had sent them to teach his worship, besides agriculture and arts, to his benighted people.

Certain it is, nevertheless, that prehistoric temples, of much more massive masonry than those assigned to the Incas, exist in Peru; and especially in the region of Lake Titicaca. Whether these, again, are connected with strange stone monuments, like small huts, of which I heard in Bolivia, called by the people 'Tombs of the Gentiles,' it is hard to guess. The latter were described to me by an English engineer, whose duties had led him far into the interior. In his belief they were raised stone sepulchres, but unusually large, as if meant for men of giant stature. The Incas themselves reckoned their dynasty to have only existed during the lives of thirteen princes before the Spanish conquest. It is evident that a previous powerful race must, therefore, have dwelt in Peru, who owned some civilization and arts, yet who mysteriously died out, not leaving even a legend among the simple Indians to tell of their past greatness.

When the Children of the Sun first arrived, whether but a royal pair or more, they speedily impressed the lower Indian race with their superior will and wisdom. What splendid roads they made, straight as those of the Romans! What a wonderful system of irrigation was theirs, seeing that the now barren mountains on the iron road to Oroya are

terraced to their summits, so that the men of our days wonder how water was possibly conducted thither! Then, how paternal was their despotic government! They gave wise laws to the weak Indians under their sway; marriage was enforced; the land was frequently redistributed, according to the numbers in a family, so that, if no subject might be rich, no man could starve. Only the ruler himself was wealthy, and to a lesser extent his numerous princely relatives who formed the nobility; and above all the Sun-god, whose granaries and treasure-houses were richly stored—and their contents borrowed by his descendant, the Inca, when needed.

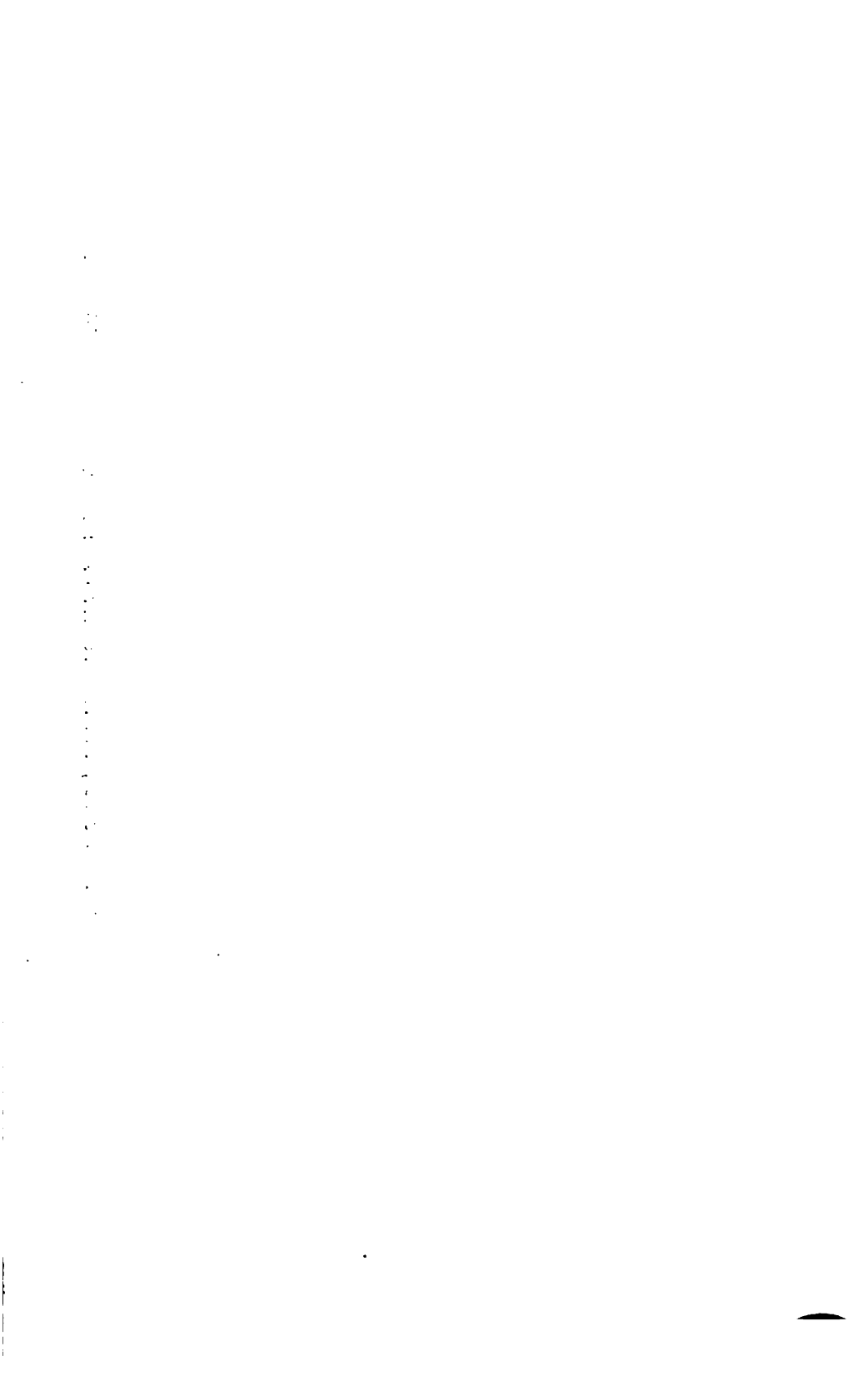
Then appeared the white men in strange ships on the coast. Pizarro and his adventurers landed, a mere handful in numbers, but armed with mail. They massacred the Indian armies with the zeal of Crusaders, in the name of Christ, while fired also with greed of gold. For so rich was Peru, that the royal gardens were decorated with golden plants, beasts and birds. And when the Inca Atahualpa was taken prisoner by stratagem, gold was brought for his ransom according to his offer, 'that he would not merely cover the floor, but would fill the room he stood in as high as he could reach.' To this end the royal city of Cuzco was despoiled, in which the great Temple of the Sun blazed with gold, according to Spanish testimony; for the Inca begged that some of the conquerors should themselves go thither, under

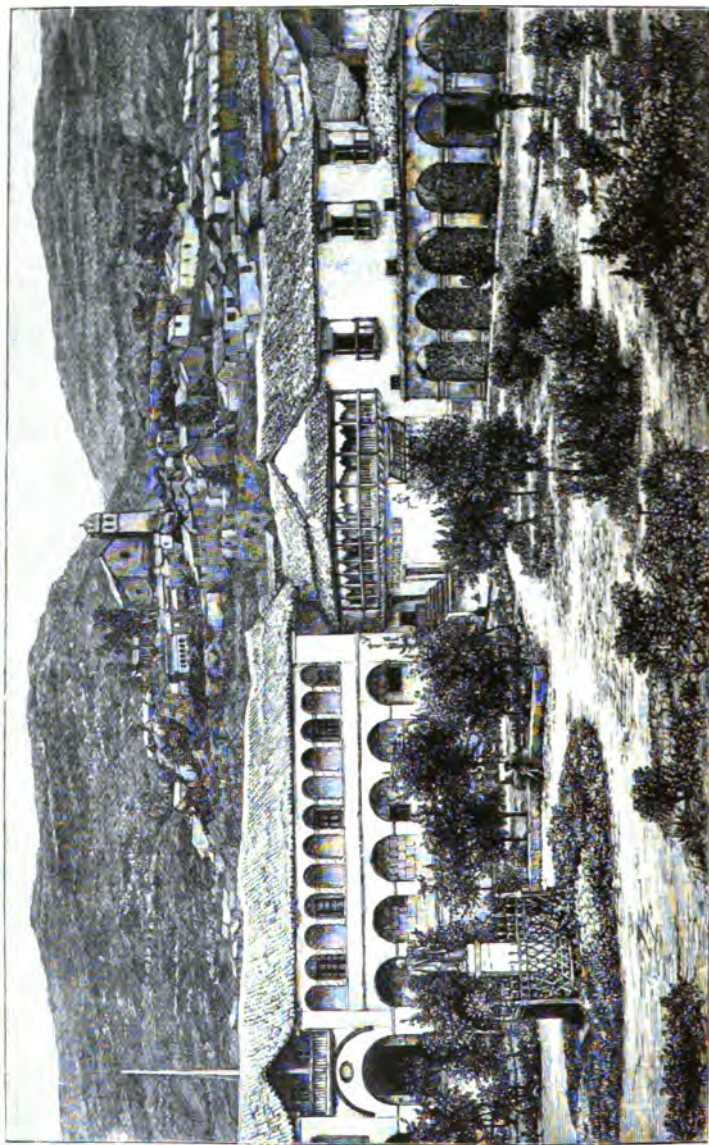
safe conduct, to see with their own eyes his good faith. The murder of Atahualpa, after this, in prison was one of the most treacherous deeds of that blood-stained conquest.

But judgment seemed to overtake the wicked in this instance. The Almagros, father and son, were put to death by the Pizarro faction ; while the great conqueror, Francisco, was himself murdered in his own house in the town of Lima, which he had founded and cherished. Later on Hernando Pizarro lingered twenty years in a Spanish prison, and Gonzalo Pizarro was beheaded.

Now, the modern criticism of Peruvian residents on Prescott's glowing account of the golden treasures of the Incas is, that, judging by those now dug up in *huacas*, the ornaments must have been very thin and the workmanship uncouth. Certainly my host, Mr. R., possessed such a specimen, which he showed me. It was a tall, tumbler-shaped golden vase, thin as paper, except at the brim ; while its design was the face, and especially the nose, of the great Duke of Wellington, rudely prophesied. Similar vases would fill a good deal of space, if piled as ransom. As to the pottery vases, generally called common *huacos*, some are ingenious, with their whistling handles, but their ornamentation is rude.

Again, none of the royal Inca graves, built of bricks, show any beauty of structure. And Atahualpa's own palace, which tradition declares was a





MODERN CUZCO, THE FORMER CITY OF THE SUN.

dwelling still standing at Cuzco, though massive, is rudely thatched. Lastly, these detractors affirm that the royal roads, while excellent in construction, show no trace of engineering, but run straight uphill, or through morasses that a slight curve might have avoided. It seems as if some monarch had decreed, 'Make me a road from here to yonder,' when thousands of Indians simply obeyed.

But, whatever the height of Peruvian civilization under the Incas, none can deny that with the Spaniards its glory departed.

Look at Peru nowadays! A degraded Indian population is mixed with Chinese and negroes. The formerly cultivated mountain-slopes lie waste. In the lowlands great sugar-estates are held by men who are all supposed to be more or less bankrupt. If any individual is lucky enough to amass some money, I was assured that he would send it secretly to Europe, and leave his native land himself as soon as possible. Otherwise, should the Government in power scent his dollars, it would certainly send him a polite but imperative request to 'give a loan to the country as a patriot.'

One owner of a large estate told me that a few days before he had been requisitioned by Government to furnish horses. For these a *vale* would be given — worth so much waste-paper. Being greatly impoverished, he was at least able to prove, even to the satisfaction of the messengers, that the

few animals he still owned were insufficient to plough his land.

The character of the Peruvian Indian seems still what it was under the rule of the Inca caste—timid, submissive, somewhat cowardly. When feeling ill, a labourer will come to his English employer, saying gently, 'Patron, I must die to-night.' Whereat the patron, if wise, kicks that man for a poor fool, telling



A CANNIBAL WOMAN OF PÉRENÉ REGION, PERU.

(From a photograph.)

him he is only lazy; and thereupon the sick man obediently gets better. If not so cured, he does die; this, at least, I was assured. Many of the heathen hill-tribes have been Christianized by the good missionary priests; not by the fat, demoralized clergy of the towns. One lady who spent Christmas lately at the Pucara mines, was amused by the Indian converts bringing her the wig of the Christ

image to be curled. Their innocent delight was great when she succeeded in the task. Beyond the Andes, the tribes in the great forests and jungle of the Amazon districts are little known ; but some are said to be given to cannibalism, while others live on roots, caterpillars, and such-like savage fare.

As in Chili, so even more in Peru, there are native wise women, in whose powers of healing unlimited faith is placed by the poor folk. One strange instance of their leechcraft was related to me by Mr. R., as having been seen by himself :

An Englishman was at the point of death from hæmorrhage and dysentery, and his case declared hopeless by the doctors. On this, Mr. R., who was nursing him, got their leave to call in the 'cure-woman' of the village ; she could do no harm if she could not do any good. The cure-woman came accordingly, and looked at the sick man. 'It is too late to save your friend ; I might have done so earlier,' she said. 'Still, I will do my best.'

Going out into the garden, she thereupon gathered herbs, on which she poured boiling water for a drink that soothed the invalid. Then she asked that four guinea-pigs should be brought to the bedside, when she cut them open down the breast with a sharp knife-stroke, next instant covering the severed flesh with mustard, and laying two of the animals spread out on each side of the patient.

Feeling that this was a last chance, Mr. R. held

the poor, living plasters, and watched with disgust but desperation their eyes goggling and their muscles quivering. To his amazement, the dying man instantly fell asleep—for days he had not closed his eyelids. The hæmorrhage also ceased ; he seemed refreshed, and at ease after great pain.

For some hours this sleep lasted, till Mr. R. began to entertain cheering hopes. Then his friend passed away painlessly. The wise woman was right : she had been called in too late.

But to this day the narrator has remained unshaken in his belief that the treatment was efficacious in soothing the agony of those last hours ; and one shrewdly guessed he even thought the cure would have succeeded if applied in time.

And now, after a month's pleasant stay, it was time to say good-bye to Peru. The country was so disturbed by the insurrection that all the pleasant rides to sun-temples, and excursions up the Oroya Railway, planned for me by my kind friends, were too dangerous to attempt. So, at least, said Mr. St. John, who had been foremost in wishing me to see these interesting sights.

So it was once more 'All aboard!' And as the big North-bound *Imperial* steamed away from Callao, I regretfully said farewell to the last shores I should visit as a guest of this most hospitable West Coast. Yet not quite the last, for at Panama,

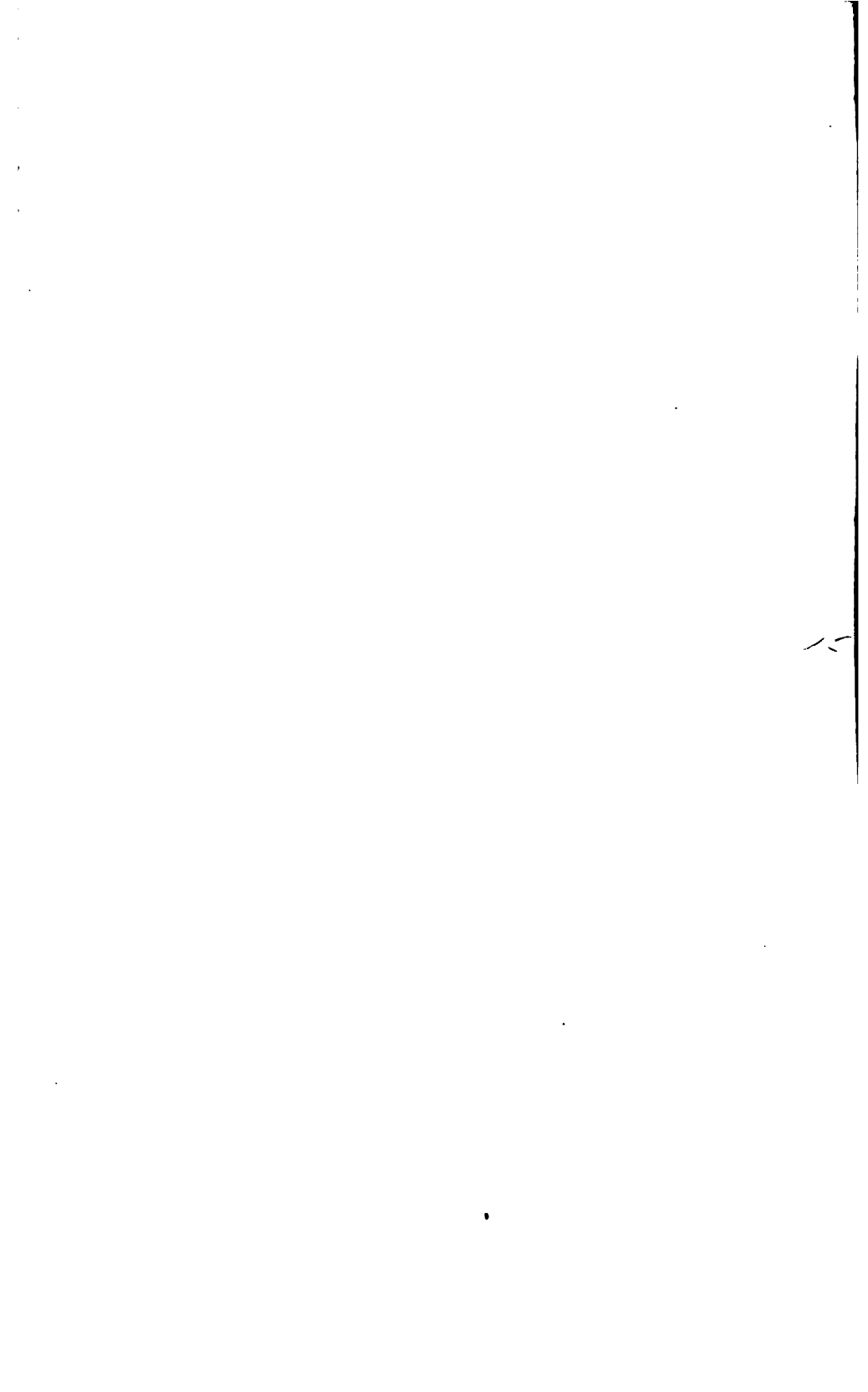
thanks to the British Consul and his wife, was I not housed by one new friend, and driven round the lovely environs, and dined by another ?

So across the isthmus—loveliest if fever-laden of jungle scenery, like a green dissolving view of heat-mists and palms, flowers, and tree-ferns—to the waiting steamer that conveyed me to Jamaica. There, not knowing anyone in the island—and only meaning to stay a few days, because alone—I found myself expected, and the guest of the Acting Governor for some five weeks. This truly delightful time was varied by short visits to other newly-made friends, whose homes were perched in leafy coigns of vantage in the famous scenery of the Blue Mountains.

There is no space left to tell my pleasing impressions of Jamaica ; besides, the beautiful island is better known than either the Argentine, Chili, or Peru. Otherwise I must have praised this emerald jewel, with its coral-white strand, set in the brilliantly blue waters of the West.

And now that I end this book, when home in England once more, my mind is still faithful to the agreeable memories of my South American trip. And to all friends who wish for a six months' winter holiday, I should heartily say, ' Go, and do likewise.'

THE END.





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